



**Thursday, March 22, 2018**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Via Zoom Meeting**  
**2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.**  
Call-in: 408 638 0968  
Meeting ID: 187 314 981

<https://zoom.us/j/187314981>

*\* For those participating by telephone, please mute your line when not speaking.*

1. Introduction
  - a. Welcome/Roll Call
  - b. Additions to Agenda
2. Consent Items 2:05 p.m.
  - a. Approval of minutes from February 20, 2018
3. Discussion/Action Items 2:05 p.m.
  - a. Focus Group Results (Adam Probolsky)
  - b. Program Committee Support Additional Fee (Melissa Dixon)
  - c. SMA Contract Amendment #4 (Alberto Preciado/Melissa Dixon)
  - d. CalCPA Agreement (Melissa Dixon)
  - e. League Community Services Policy Committee Representative (Margaret Moggia)
  - f. Amended 2018 Chapter Handbook (Drew Corbett)
  - g. President's Discretionary Budget (Drew Corbett)
  - h. Increasing CSMFO Members from Counties (Drew Corbett)
4. Committee Reports 2:55 p.m.
  - a. Administration (Alberto Preciado)
  - b. Career Development (Laura Nomura)
  - c. Communications Committee (Marcus Pimentel)
  - d. Membership (Grace Castaneda)
  - e. Professional Standards (Tim Kirby)
  - f. Program (Ronnie Campbell)
  - g. Recognition (Sara Roush)
  - h. Technology (Damien Charlety)

5. Chapter Roundtable 3:15 p.m.
6. Board Member Ad Hoc Reports 3:25 p.m.
  - a. Student Engagement (Jennifer Wakeman)
  - b. Chapter Engagement (Steve Heide)
  - c. Advocacy (Carrie Corder)
  - d. Committee Roles (Jimmy Forbis)
  - e. CSMFO Leadership Academy (Scott Catlett)
  - f. CSMFO App (Richard Lee)
7. Officer Reports 3:45 p.m.
  - a. President (Margaret Moggia)
  - b. Past President (Drew Corbett)
  - c. President-Elect (Joan Michaels Aguilar)
8. Other Items
9. Future Topics
10. Next Meeting – Thursday, May 24, 11:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
11. Adjournment 4:00 p.m.

# California Society of Municipal Finance Officers

## Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

February 20, 2018

### **In Attendance**

Margaret Moggia

Drew Corbett

Joan Michaels Aguilar

Melissa Dixon

Steve Heide

Jimmy Forbis

Carrie Corder

Richard Lee

Jennifer Wakeman

Scott Catlett

Kate Zawadzki

Laura Nomura

Marcus Pimentel

Grace Castaneda

Craig Boyer

Monica Lo

Karla Campos

Dennis Kauffman

Sarah Erck

Karan Reid

Christy Pinuelas

Melinda Brodsky

Margaret O'Brien

Laura Nomura

Christine Paras

Justin Lewis

Nitish Sharma

David Cain

June Overholt

Christine Paras

Brad Wilkie

Stephen Parker

Robin Bertagna

Will Fuentes

Jeannine Thrash

Mary Bradley

Pamela Arends-King

### **Introduction**

The California Society of Municipal Finance Officers (CSMFO) Board of Directors met via teleconference on Tuesday, February 20, 2018. President Margaret Moggia convened the meeting and confirmed a quorum was in attendance at 1:13pm.

### **Consent Calendar**

The Board addressed the consent calendar, which included minutes from the January 2018 Board of Directors meeting and financials from January 2018. Correction to the minutes: Margaret was not on the call to give her report. She only provided the written report. Staff will correct that. Administration Committee Chair Kate Zawadzki reviewed the financial reports. Past President Drew Corbett moved to approve all items in the Consent Calendar, as amended. Director Jimmy Forbis seconded. Motion passed.

### **Reserve Balances**

Administration Committee Chair Zawadzki reviewed the reserve policy, and reported that in addition to the restricted reserves, CSMFO has \$348,138 in discretionary reserves.

## **Consultant Contracts**

Administration Committee Chair Zawadzki reviewed the committee report and the individual contracts were discussed.

### *Don Maruska*

Discussion of the ongoing contract for Don Maruska. It was recommended that the Career Development Committee should be involved in negotiations (with regard to scope).

Career Development will pursue a two-year extension to the current contract. In the meantime, an updated scope based on current needs will be developed by the Career Development Committee, in preparation for a potential RFP.

### *Michael Coleman*

Review of current contract scope and fees.

Steve Heide, Richard Lee and Dennis Kaufman will take on the task of reviewing Coleman's performance and scope to determine whether adjustments are necessary. They will report back in May.

### *SMA*

The current contract was extended to 2021 however certain amendments also require extensions.

- Amendment #1 expires at the end of 2018. Past President Corbett moved to extend (under current fees) to 2020. Director Forbis seconded. Motion passed.
- Amendment #3 regarding Program Committee services expired with the end of the 2018 Annual Conference. Past President Corbett moved to instruct the Administration Committee to move forward with a renewal for those services, to be coterminous with the base contract. Director Forbis seconds. Motion passed.

## **Webinar-Sharing Pilot Program**

Director Carrie Corder reported on potentially allowing Oregon and Washington to participate in our webinars at no cost, the way we did last year with Alaska. There was much discussion on this, including concerns that CSMFO members would be covering the cost of benefits to other states.

Past President Corbett moved to pilot a program for Oregon and Washington in 2018 to offer CSMFO webinars free of charge, and then explore a fee structure for future years, assuming there is significant interest. Director Jennifer Wakeman seconded. Motion passed.

## **Quick Hits Recommendation**

Director Scott Catlett demonstrated the first Quick Hit as well as the Career Development Committee recommendations for this program going forward. New standards were reviewed (headshot only, stationary camera, flat background, stay stationary, business attire). Committee would like permission to move forward with doing more Quick Hits videos for 2018.

President-Elect Joan Michaels Aguilar moved to approve the recommendations as outlined in the report. Director Richard Lee seconded. Motion carried.

## **CSMFO App**

Director Lee informed the Board that he would be working on creating a CSMFO smartphone app in 2018, with input from the members.

### **CSMFO Style Guide Revision**

Communications Committee Chair Marcus Pimentel reviewed the report regarding revisions to the style guide. The idea is to provide consistency and guidelines for best practices.

President Corbett moved to approve the guide as presented. Seconded by Director Forbis. Motion passed.

### **Database Update and Demonstration**

SMA CIO Justin Lewis demonstrated the progress of the database as it stands. We are not as far along as we'd hoped to be at this time but progress is being made.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Membership**

Membership Committee Chair Grace Castaneda reminded all to attend the First Time Attendee reception. Also noted that five experts will be available this year in the CSMFO booth.

#### **Program**

Program Committee Senior Advisor Mary Bradley reported that we have nearly twice the number of sessions this year. The Program Committee will wait to see what attendees think of the increase in options.

#### **Recognition**

Recognition Committee Senior Advisor Craig Boyer reported that the number of budget awards processed each year continues to increase. One Innovation award was given out.

#### **Technology**

Director Lee reminded the Board and committees to use Zoom for teleconference meeting.

### **League Policy Committee Reports**

Director Lee reminded the Board that SB1 talking points from the League should be being used.

#### **President**

President Moggia expressed appreciation at being CSMFO's President.

#### **Past President**

Past President Corbett reminded all that the Chapter Chair Breakfast will be held in the Orange Crest Room at the Marriott.

Brief overview of discussions with CSAC regarding liaising with counties and how to get them more involved in CSMFO. More detailed report to come in March.

#### **President-Elect**

President-Elect Michaels Aguilar reported that the 2018 Strategic Planning Session will be held Sept 30-October 2 in San Diego at the Kona Kai Resort.

Discussion of the 2019 Conference theme – Guardians of the Finance Galaxy.

Other items:

Next meeting is scheduled for March 22, 2018 at 2pm via teleconference.

Volunteer Appreciation jackets distributed to Officers and Directors. Please provide feedback to Grace and the Membership Committee regarding the program.

President Moggia adjourned the meeting at 3:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Erck  
Deputy Director

# **California Society of Municipal Finance Officers Focus Group - Report on Results -**

---

March 5, 2018

---

**DRAFT ONLY – CONFIDENTIAL - DISTRIBUTION RESTRICTED**



**Opinion Research on  
Elections and Public Policy**

**Probolsky Research**  
3990 Westerly Place Suite 185  
Newport Beach CA 92660

Newport Beach (949) 855-6400  
San Francisco (415) 870-8150  
Washington DC (202) 559-270

# Table of Contents

<b>QUALITATIVE REPORT .....</b>	<b>1</b>
INTRODUCTION & METHOD .....	1
SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS .....	2
<b>APPENDIX A: DISCUSSION GUIDE .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>APPENDIX B: TRANSCRIPTS.....</b>	<b>16</b>



**Probolsky Research**  
3990 Westerly Place Suite 185  
Newport Beach CA 92660

Newport Beach	(949) 855-6400
San Francisco	(415) 870-8150
Washington DC	(202) 559-0270

# Qualitative Report

## Introduction & Method

On behalf of the California Society of Municipal Finance Officers, Probolsky Research conducted one 60-minute focus group discussion, moderated by Adam Probolsky, of members of the California Society of Municipal Finance Officers from a cross-section of government agency types.

### Focus Group: Riverside, CA

**Date:** Thursday, February 22, 2018  
**Start Time:** 12:00 pm  
**End Time:** 1:00 pm  
**Location:** Marriott Riverside  
Orangecrest Room  
3400 Market Street  
Riverside, CA 92501

**Link:** <https://probolskyresearch.box.com/s/z0w25hiccwldt177v4pvkrg6fxfk7lgj>

The primary goal of this focus group is to help explore the attitudes of members of the California Society of Municipal Finance Officers on the organization's priorities, programs and direction.

This memorandum highlights key commentary from the discussions, with our goal to deliver actionable information. You will also likely find reviewing the transcripts and watching the video to be helpful towards developing a rich, unique understanding of the vernacular and tone of residents.

It is important to note that, while the results of the focus group are not statistically significant, they can be an effective aid for the development of creative materials, improving education, and expanding outreach targeting.

We have provided transcripts for the focus group session as an appendix. It is important to note that, while we have largely captured all spoken words of the moderator and participants, transcriptions are not 100% accurate.



This session was videotaped with participants' consent, and the primary raw data for the following analysis is the typed transcript of the audio recording. No one-way mirrors were installed in the event room, so all participants including observers were visible to one another.

#### Focus Group Participants

- Melissa, City
- Debra, County
- Mary, Special District
- Kevin, Special District
- Bob, City
- Janna, City

## Summary of the Results

Quotations from focus group participants appear below as indented text. Three periods within quotations signify omitted text, usually repeated words or “um,” “you know” and similar phrases. Three periods sometimes signal the omission of words irrelevant to the message but under no circumstances are words omitted in a manner that might change the participant's meaning. In a few instances, words within a quotation appear in brackets. These words are added for clarity and to facilitate interpretation of the participant's meaning.

The discussion opened with introductions and the exchange of basic information to build rapport and to facilitate deeper communication.

### **Overall Opinions: CSMFO**

Members see CSMFO as a “support group” that helps with career advancement, job performance and networking to develop “you to be a more capable finance professional.”

- “...it's a **support group**, to **help us do our job in a better manner**. It's a source of **reaching out to our peers**, it's made networking really easy to do, they put on training that is **very valuable** to staff, especially staff that are new to government accounting.” Bob, City
- “**Networking, advancing my career, making contacts** with other agencies. I really like that **everybody wants to help** everybody...” Janna, City



- “I would say the word **development** comes to my mind. **Career development, relationship development, skills development.** It's all about helping you to be a more capable finance professional.” Kevin, Special District
- “I have friendships that have developed through this that are **lifelong friends...**” Mary, Special District
- “... **understanding...** the latest trends analysis, or rules and regulations, **because... you can't get a straight answer from sources that you would think would provide them...**” Debra, County
- “...we can **bounce ideas and problems** that we're having off of each other.” Melissa, City

ListServe: Members cite the ability to “get a straight answer or bounce an idea off of someone” as an integral part of the organization.

- “...the ability just to **reach out and send them a mass email** to everybody in your district to say, you know, 'We're **looking for feedback** on how you do this, or how are you doing that, '....” Melissa, City
- “Yes, the beauty is, is that we're **not in competition with one another**, so why not share? Why create the wheel all over again...?” Kevin, Special District
- “...the **ListServe**, the opportunity to ask.” Bob, City

After the ListServe, members point to the directory as a valuable networking tool.

- “...the other tool that we use...the **directory**. I can reach out to someone specifically because I know how to contact ... [if] we're trying to research, here are the six different cities that are... comparable to us...” Bob, City
- “...cannabis is a big topic right now, so we **can reach out** and see if they're implementing it... **Software**-wise, are they using the same kind of software? ... and being able to... reach out for **mentoring** or career development...” Melissa, City

Career Development: Members see CSMFO as a tool for career development.

- “If I'm **hiring**, and I see that somebody has been involved, in any type of organization, but especially this one because I know what they would be **learning...**” Mary, Special District



- “They also have ... a **job position postings**, that's available online...” Kevin, Special District
- “What kind of **jobs are out** there...” Debra, County
- “...you learn things that you weren't aware of...that does get the attention of your supervisor, your boss. It shows initiative...” Kevin, Special District
- “I did a ten year plan ... really proud of... and I sent it out there, and somebody else used it ... and she said, 'I put one together like that for my city manager, and he was so happy ... **we've developed a relationship over this one little Excel file.**” Mary, Special District

Suggestions: Members recommend a lower webinar fee, increased career development and an easier way to manage email traffic on the ListServe.

- “...Their **webinars** that are put on are really excellent...they **current charge \$25 an hour**... I'd personally love to see that **less**. I have CPAs on my staff that struggle every year to get enough CPE.” Bob, City
- “...**more career development ... more coaching and mentoring**, and events and training...” Melissa, City
- “I was off of the **ListServe** for quite a while...wasn't doing some of the same things at that level, and I was **tired of all the emails**...I was **shocked at the number of emails** I got from other things ... so much extra stuff.” Mary, Special District

CSMFO members cite organizational awards, report templates and events/trainings that are the core benefits provided by the organization.

- “... if you do have a **comprehensive annual financial report, it can be reviewed** by CSMFO staff ... the **Budget Award**... the **Innovation Award**. Talking about getting really good **kudos with your board**... **board members love** knowing that they've got an award for anything.” Kevin, Special District
- “The **Innovation Award**... helps them cover themselves, because this report has been **peer reviewed**.” Mary, Special District



- “... I feel like this has helped us work together as a team, because we all break off into different sessions, then we meet for lunch, and we talk about what we've learned ... that's **really helped us build on our teamworking skills.**” Janna, City
- “... the individual **trainings**, the basic accounting class, the intermediate accounting, **very helpful...**” Bob, City

### **CSMFO Priorities**

When asked to rank CSMFO's top strategic priorities, members ranked the following order:

- 5 votes: Volunteer Utilization and Appreciation
- 3 votes: Orientation Package for New and Existing Members
- 3 votes: Branding/Outreach/Promote CSMFO
- 2 votes: New Technology
- 1 vote: Student Engagement

New Technology: Members say that, with constantly evolving technology, the organization has a role in updating members about the best tools available.

- “...we're **in an age** where technology is **always changing**, and there are **always more efficient ways** to do things...” Melissa, City

Branding: Members point to the organization's long name and difficult-to-remember acronym as reason to emphasize branding, outreach and promotion.

- “Just the **name alone** ... try to say, remember it, CSMFO, and they're like, 'What is it?' ... **'What's this group?'** I was just told to join ... would give it more **support and legitimacy...**” Debra, County
- “... it's **part of the branding... the chapters** can be great ways to meet people...” Mary, Special District

Student Engagement: One member said that attending a college career day would have given her greater confidence to enter the public sector.

- “...I'm new to government ...it would have been helpful... in **college... during career day...** if CSMFO would have been there ... knowing that there is another organization out there that could help you in the public sector...” Janna



Volunteer Utilization & Appreciation: Members say that they are open to providing more assistance and that the organization should be more explicit in asking for help.

- “**Recognition.** Everybody wants to...know you **appreciate** what they've done.” Mary, Special District
- “... **at my stage in career**, I should be, really, volunteering more and serving other agencies more in some capacity ... I could **probably be guilted into doing it more...**” Kevin, Special District
- “...You're new to government and you don't know about the program, then you, kind of, **go under the radar...**” Melissa, City

Member Orientation Package: Members express a need for an improved orientation packet that explains how conferences work.

- “Like the **annual conference**, when I first signed up, I was **trying to figure out**, 'Well how does it work? ' I didn't know, did I have to come to pre-register and then register at the class I go? ... I **just showed up and it worked.**” Debra, County
  - “That's a **good point.**” Kevin, Special District
- “...this is my first conference, and **my director told me how the whole process works**, because I was, like, 'Well how does it work? ' So it's not explained.” Melissa, City

Succession Planning: Member say that they had not previously thought about CSMFO's role in succession planning.

- “...Maybe a more formalized succession program would be helpful... get the emails about this class going on... '**consider bringing your staff** through this program of education as career development, succession planning'... **never really thought about CSMFO specifically for succession planning.** I thought of it as staff development...” Kevin, Special District
- “I have to agree. I **don't** feel that it is... a **succession planning...** back to networking, but **not a true succession plan**” Melissa, City

Curriculum: Members see CSMFO as playing a role in developing a curriculum that would help members with succession planning.



- “... **more of a need now**, because of **everybody that's retiring** and the lack of **new talent coming in...**” Melissa, City

## Certification

Members see GFOA's CPFO certification programs as difficult and expensive.

- “Yes, our organization currently sends people to GFOA. They have, like, accounting academies and budget academies... it's **pretty expensive...**” Janna, City
- “...GFOA offers the CPFO certification ... I think there are still less than 1000 people that have passed all the exams ...it would be... neat if CSMFO **developed some kind of certification...** some CPAs ...don't know that they really want to do the CPFO, because there's a huge time commitment and a lot of test taking ... nice to develop ... certified California financial accountant **certification ... Not make it too big a hurdle...**” Bob, City
  - “I **love that...** I want someone to **lower the bar.**” Kevin, Special District
  - “**Yes.**” Janna, City
- “...competing with GFOA... if you've really taken any of their classes ... a very broad overview... Maybe CSMFO can provide one that's... 'This is why we're preparing the footnotes, and this is **how you prepare the footnotes.**'” Melissa, City
  - “I agree ... **augment that with additional ones** that cover more of the nuts and bolts of how to do certain aspects of the CAFR...” Bob, City
- “... **forced discipline...** if I knew I had to be at a class, okay, I'll do it. If I knew that I really had to do it on the weekends, I'll never do it.” Kevin, Special District

## Training vs. Advocacy

Training First: Members primarily see CSMFO's role as an organization to provide training over advocacy.

- “... I'm still new to government... training is important, that should be number one for CSMFO to **concentrate on... training... helps us all become better servants...** helps us understand the financial statements more...” Janna, City



- “**Training**, because you could then be the advocate.’Oh, where did you learn this?...” Debra

Advocacy: Members see other organizations that cater to specific types of government agencies as filling the role of advocacy.

- “Coming from a water agency, there is **already that infrastructure...** ACWA, AWWA, CSDA, CASA ... at least in water... **a lot of advocacy already.**” Kevin
- “I think the **League of California Cities is more of our advocacy** agency...” Bob, City
- “I’d, kind of, hate to have them **get deluded** from some of the programs that they have **by trying to take on a real significant advocacy role.**” Mary, Special District

Members see CSMFO’s advocacy role best served by supporting other entities at the organizational level, which “need help.”

- “...there's an element... as finance officers... come at it... from a **different viewpoint** than others. So I think ... **supporting the League is a great way for CSMFO to have impact** and help shape some of the financial issues.” Bob, City
- “...I **don't** know that **the League** really always has the focus or the knowledge that the **finance people** have. They're all the city managers ... if there could be a way to funnel some of the information up to that group, that could be really helpful.” Mary, Special District
  - “Yes, I agree with that. It **does need good support and advocacy from the financial side** of things.” Bob, City

Advocacy Tools: Members support legislative alerts as an advocacy tool offered by CSMFO.

- “... a bill, SB 1998, that will affect, well, SB 623, even sooner, will affect what you put, you might have to put something on your water to help fund a low income program. I'd love to know that... **email alert ... this is coming down the line...here are some** links.” Kevin, Special District
- “... a **useful tool in general**, new stuff that's coming out that might be affecting, and just referring ... see that being helpful.” Melissa, City



## Tools & Resources

Smartphone App: Members offer mixed views on whether they would use a smartphone app – with members seeing it most useful as an all-inclusive resource for conference information.

- “I wouldn't particularly. I have **enough intrusion into my personal life**, and my computer at work is a great way for CSMFO to reach out to me... I wouldn't [use the directory if it was on an app]. I can already get to it.” Bob, City
- “...**younger generations**, as they're coming at that, yes... **the whole conference**, and having it **all in one app**...” Melissa, City
- “... do your **schedule** then just getting to everything.... if you're **looking for one spot**...” Debra, County

Magazine: Members say that, while they appreciate the content, they generally do not read the CSMFO magazine.

- “I **don't think I've honestly ever seen** a CSMFO magazine.” Melissa, City
- “I think the same thing, I've **never read** it.” Debra, County
- “I would **pay more to have it printed**. I just don't like to read magazines on a screen...I was disappointed when they went from the print to the online.” Kevin, Special District
- “I've **never read** it.” Janna, City
- “I read it ... It's a **very high quality** document, I think it's **really valuable** to us, I think they do a great job...” Bob, City
- “...should be... **having copies [at] the chapter meetings**.” Mary, Special District

Magazine Content: Members offer a variety of opinions about magazine content with a desire for more links, an executive summary of long articles and “a good combination of everything.”



- “... a **good combination of everything**... this city is doing this, while this is still a hot topic for everybody... I would like to see **just a good mix**.” Melissa, City
- “...a **focused... article**... up and coming **bills or bonds or votes** that are coming up.” Debra, County
- “**No long articles**, because I think that we're all busy, and I wouldn't have the time to read a long article, but if it was a bunch of, like, **short little articles on hot topics** and things like that, that we **could skim** through, that would be really helpful.” Janna, City
- “...some of the **articles deserve to be in depth**. Maybe make sure there's an **executive summary**.” Bob, City
- “A **link**, with **links**, maybe, to get **more information**.” Kevin, Special District

### Annual Conference

Members find the annual conference to be a “very valuable” event and would like to see more public speaking sessions.

- “...it would depend on what the content is. Like, the **public speaking** one, I agree, I think that should be **an all-day thing**... be more ... **career development** side of things...” Melissa, City
- “... you could have it Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday ... So you don't have to be all four days if **you can't afford it**.” Debra, County
- “... the **public speaking**... should be an **all-day offering**, for each day... that would be beneficial to everybody.” Janna, City

Members would like to see the annual conference present more in-depth content, rather than keynote speeches or brief overviews of topics.

- “... **very valuable**. This particular year ... an even **greater variety of topics** that are being covered... **Variety is good**. I'm more of a fan of, like, the Tuesday sessions, because they're more in-depth ... I would rather get a lot **more in-depth content** on just one subject than all these other topics I've heard before...” Kevin, Special District



- “... water rates...You are not going to really end up getting much on water rates in an hour and fifteen. Maybe if we had that rates one also on another day, you could do it, because some topics really just aren't made for an hour and fifteen minutes... The real **in-depth training ... this public speaking one...** more of that.” Kevin, Special District
- “... the group has done an excellent job of putting together a pretty flexible and valuable program, so I'm **pretty happy with the present format**, but I'm hearing there is interest in more of these **longer, more comprehensive sessions.**” Bob, City
- “...I **don't really care that we have two keynote speakers in one day...** I'd rather take another class and learn something else than have to sit through two keynote speakers.” Melissa, City

### Closing Thoughts

Members are very happy with CSMFO and are actively looking to help the organization by becoming more engaged.

- “I'm really pleased CMSFO, so I think you **did a good job**. I think they're doing **a good job.**” Bob, City
- “... **reach out to volunteer**, and say, 'Hey, we'd like you to come and assist us,' and you don't have to be a subject matter expert to, you know, set up a room... so that they can **provide more of that training.**” Debra, County
- “... **reaching out** and saying, hey, we **need help volunteering** at the chapter meeting, or at the conference, or teaching...” Melissa, City
- “... **how do you become a volunteer?** I have no idea, what if I'm in Sacramento for a week, and I just want to volunteer somewhere at CSMFO, if there is an event going on? How do I know that they need one? Is it, you know, on their site?” Janna, City

ListServe Etiquette and Website Curation: Members would like to see a better explanation of proper ListServe etiquette and the curation of resources on the CSMFO website.

- “... when we send out requests for policies and procedures, maybe having them **link it back to their website, of that information**, so that it's just readily



available, instead of having to go to the ListServe and sending it all out... Taking what you've received and actually **putting it on the website** so it's just readily there.” Melissa, City

- “**People are proud**, I think, to provide these things that they've worked really hard on to others, and I think that's one of the things that makes this whole type of an organization special.” Mary, Special District
- “They need to reinforce it, because what you're supposed to do when you get all those responses, the recipient of all the responses is supposed to put them together and **post them up to the website**... No, they **need that loaded up to the website**.” Bob, City



# Appendix A: Discussion Guide

**>>>Urge bathroom run 5 min before start time.**

Good afternoon and welcome to our discussion group session. Thank you for taking the time to join us this afternoon to discuss **leadership and member priorities for the California Society of Municipal Finance Officers – CSMFO**.

My name is Adam Probolsky, I run a research company based California, and assisting me today are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Our goal this afternoon is to have an open discussion about CSMFO leadership and membership issues and priorities, and to broaden the perspective beyond leadership and those heavily involved as to what CSMFO provides its members.

**You were invited because you are all members of CSMFO.**

As you can see, our discussion this afternoon **will be audio and video taped**. We are recording the session because **we don't want to miss anything** that's said. People often say some very helpful things in these discussions and we can't write fast enough to get it all down.

**For privacy reasons, we will be on a first-name only basis.**

Understanding this, may I quickly **confirm that is it all right with each of you to record this discussion?** Everyone please **signify your permission by saying, "yes"**.

This discussion is being conducted for research purposes only. No one will follow up or try to sell you any kind of product or service.

I will be available after our session to answer any questions.

## **Discussion Group Ground Rules**

Since each person's comments are important, I ask that **only one person speak at a time**. This will help us to hear each other.

Please **direct all comments toward me** and **speak up**.

There is **no such thing as a right or wrong answer** in this group, just differing points of view.

Tell us what you honestly think, and **feel free to share whatever is on your mind**.

We're just as **interested in negative comments as positive comments**.

We want everyone to participate, but **no one to dominate the conversation**.



If you **disagree with something that you hear, let us know.**

If you **agree, try to add more than just, “I agree,” by sharing your own perspective.**

**My role is not to express my opinions,** but I will bring up some ideas and see what you think about them. And **I will at times move the conversation along** to make sure I can get you out of here on time.

### **Warm-up**

Name cards on the table in front of you will help us remember each-others names'. Let's find out some more about each other by going around the table.

Say your first name and something fun or interesting about yourself in 10 seconds or less. Let's start with you? *[Indicate one group member to start, and go around the table.]*

### **General Topics for Discussion**

1. **What does CSMFO mean to you?** What suggestions do you have to improve the value CSMFO deliveries to the membership?
2. **How does CSMFO add value for you today?** Are there areas CSMFO should put more resources into?
3. Please look at list of CSMFO's top strategic priorities in front of you.  
**Are these important to you?** What specifically in each category is important to you? Are there things that are missing?

**New technology**

**Branding/Outreach/Promote CSMFO**

**Formalize Chapter Structures**

**Outreach to potential new members**

**Volunteer utilization and appreciate**

**Develop student engagement plan**

**Develop orientation package for new and existing members**



4. **How can CSMFO as an organization assist with your agency's succession planning?** (i.e. student engagement/recruitment/etc.?)
5. **What else should CSMFO consider as they try to meet the needs of the membership?**
6. **Should CSMFO's main focus be on training, advocacy, or something else?**
7. **Should CSMFO have their own certification, or is the GFOA's CPFO sufficient?**
8. **Would you find a CSMFO smartphone app useful?** What would you like to see on it?
9. **How valuable is the CSMFO Magazine?** What would you like to see more/less of? What type of content in the CSMFO Magazine is useful to you? (i.e. in-depth content vs. brief, downloadable content vs. news style web pages, more/less human-interest pieces)
10. **How valuable is the CSMFO Annual Conference?** What would you like to see more/less of?

Thank you very much for participating in this group discussion. Your comments and suggestions are highly valued.



# Appendix B: Transcripts

[Adam:] Welcome to our discussion group. We're going to discuss leadership and member priorities for the CSMFO. I'm Adam Probolsky, I run a research firm permanently working for local government and then associations and corporate clients, here in California, where we're based. Scott is assisting me today, you're invited because you're members of the California Society of Municipal Finance Officers, that's pretty much the sum total of your qualifications. So as you can see, we're audio and video-taping, because I can't write everything down quick enough. We're on a first-name only basis for privacy reasons, but feel free to, you know, say more about yourself if you want, but if we can just acknowledge by saying, 'Yes', that we're okay being videoed and audioed, that would be great, okay?

Yes (x6).

[Adam:] Of course, we're just doing this for research only, and we can talk after if you want to have any questions. Some goals, one person speaking at a time would be helpful, and then direct all the comments my way, would be helpful. No such thing as a wrong answer. Negative answers are just as appreciated as positive answers, but especially if you agree with someone, don't just say, 'I agree,' or, 'I disagree,' say why, would be helpful. I'm not supposed to necessarily express my opinions, but I will, maybe, inject an idea and see what you think about it. So let's get started, maybe just say your name the way you like it to be said, and one fact in six seconds or less about yourself, if you, you know, just came back from Europe or you've got a cat or you drive a Ferrari. Bob?

[Bob:] Bob, and I just saw the Rose Bowl game, very cool.

[Janna:] I'm Janna, and I have two children.

[Kevin:] I'm Kevin, married 26 years, going to Bali next month.

[Adam:] Sweet.

[Kevin:] Yes.

[Mary:] I'm Mary, and I have three sons.

[Debra:] I'm Debra, and I have a four-legged son, Cash.



[Melissa:] I'm Melissa, and I have two kids.

[Adam:] Very cool. Okay, if everybody can speak up, that would be great. So let's start out, what does CSMFO mean to you? Not necessarily the name, but organizationally, what does it mean to you? What's your connection to the organization?

[Bob:] For me, I think it's a support group, to help us do our job in a better manner. It's a source of reaching out to our peers, it's made networking really easy to do, they put on training that is very valuable to staff, especially staff that are new to government accounting.

[Adam:] Okay, stop there. Janna?

[Janna:] Networking, advancing my career, making contacts with other agencies. I really like that everybody wants to help everybody, and especially with, like, all the new \*inaudible\*, the implementations, and it's just making the connections, that way you can reach out to people and they can help you if you're not understanding something.

[Adam:] Okay, yes.

[Kevin:] I would say the word development comes to my mind. Career development, relationship development, skills development. It's all about helping you to be a more capable finance professional.

[Mary:] I've been involved with CSMFO for over 30 years. I've been on the board, I've been a chapter chair, I've been the committee chair, I have friendships that have developed through this that are lifelong friends, besides all of those other benefits. It's just been, it's definitely been a part of my life for a long time, in a very positive way.

[Adam:] Okay.

[Debra:] I signed up a couple of years ago, but never really utilized it until recently. Just trying to read more about the networking, and also understanding, like, the latest trends analysis, or rules and regulations, because sometimes, you can't get a straight answer from sources that you would think would provide them, as well as opportunity to meet people and understand, just, the process of an organization like this, how they are structured, and the reasons why they're here.

[Adam:] Okay.



[Melissa:] I think of it as, like, a resource that we can reach out to other cities, and see how other cities or counties are doing practices and, like, policies and procedures, and then networking and building a relationship so that we can bounce ideas and problems that we're having off of each other.

[Adam:] So let's go over, a couple of times, this idea of being able to reach out to someone and ask a question and get a straight answer or bounce an idea off of someone. Is that something that you think is an integral part of CSMFO, or something that you could probably do on your own? How does CSMFO help you with that sort of thing?

[Melissa:] I think they provide, like, through their website, the ability just to reach out and send them a mass email to everybody in your district to say, you know, 'We're looking for feedback on how you do this, or how are you doing that,' kind of thing. So they just give you that tool to reach everybody, rather than individually reaching out on somebody's website.

[Adam:] Have all of you used that ListServe before?

Yes (x4).

[Adam:] Have you all sent an email?

Yes (x3)

[Debra:] No.

[Kevin:] Only responded.

[Adam:] Only responded. Everyone else has?

[Debra:] No, I haven't used it yet.

[Adam:] Okay, but do you read those when they come out?

[Debra:] Once in a while, yes.

[Adam:] Okay.



[Kevin:] Yes, the beauty is, is that we're not in competition with one another, so why not share? Why create the wheel all over again, when someone else has already done RFB for an investment manager, or whatever it might be?

[Adam:] Sure. You also, people have mentioned networking. What does that look like, how is that beneficial to you?

[Bob:] Well, partially related to the previous question, the other tool that we use, I use a lot, is the directory. I can reach out to someone specifically because I know how to contact, or often I'll give it to a staff person that we're trying to research, here are the six different cities that are, kind of, comparable to us, go call what's in the directory, and we get pretty good results. The networking is that, the ListServe, the opportunity to ask.

[Adam:] What is the-,

[Mary:] The chapter meetings.

[Bob:] The chapter meetings.

[Adam:] Okay, but what does, like, networking do for you, necessarily? I mean, is it just, okay, I can talk to somebody else who speaks my language, or is it something specific?

[Melissa:] I think it goes both, hand in hand, one being that we can reach out to them if they're doing the same thing. Like, cannabis is a big topic right now, so we can reach out and see if they're implementing it, are they not implementing it? Software-wise, are they using the same kind of software? Also, going personal and, kind of, knowing somebody, and being able to, like, reach out for mentoring or career development in the sense of, maybe, you know, if I can become friends with Debra, you know, maybe later on she'll know me, and when she has that opportunity that comes up.

[Adam:] Okay, it was career development, was, kind of, mentioned also. How does, maybe you just hit the nail on the head, or maybe there are some other ideas. How does being a part of the organization help with career development? Specifically advancing your career.

[Mary:] If I'm hiring, and I see that somebody has been involved, in any type of organization, but especially this one because I know what they would be learning, that is, you know, a plus.

[Adam:] Other people agree with that statement?



Yes (x3).

[Kevin:] They also have a career post, or a job position postings, that's available online too, but if you're interested in doing something different.

[Adam:] Okay.

[Mary:] That everybody looks at just for fun, on and off, like you guys, always got to see what's going on, it's, you can find-,

[Janna:] Yes.

[Kevin:] I'm not looking for another job, by the way.

[Mary:] You're always, like, want to see who's now moved from one place to the other.

[Adam:] Great, yes.

[Debra:] What kind of jobs are out there, because sometimes you're so focused, and then you see, oh wait, this job does, maybe, similar, but oh, they have an investment aspect or a debt aspect, oh, okay, I'd like to learn more about that.

[Adam:] Okay.

[Kevin:] I would add to that, if you bring-, here, you learn things that you weren't aware of, that you didn't know, and if you bring them back to the organization and implement something that's been proved helpful, that does get the attention of your supervisor, your boss. It shows initiative, not just staying with status quo, so that could help advance your career within your own organization?

[Adam:] People agree with that?

Yes (x2).

[Adam:] Has anyone taken advantage of something like that? Is there an example you can give?

[Mary:] I did a ten year plan for one of my old cities, and somebody asked for examples of one, and I was really proud of this thing, and I sent it out there, and somebody else used it. This was



probably fifteen years ago, and I still, I saw her at the conference at the end of the year, and she said, 'I put one together like that for my city manager, and he was so happy with what I had come up with.' Way to go, and, you know, every year now I see her, and we've developed a relationship over this one little Excel file.

[Adam:] That's awesome. Okay, so is there, to put it out there, any specific suggestions you could think of right now, where CSMFO could improve delivering services or what they do for members? Is there anything specific you can think of right now?

[Bob:] I've come up with one item. Their webinars that are put on are really excellent. A lot of us who are also CPAs have 80 hours of CPE we have to obtain every two years, and they current charge \$25 an hour. It'd be nice, I generally don't take advantage of that, just because the \$25 is a little higher than I think it could be, or needs to be.

[Adam:] Okay.

[Bob:] I'd personally love to see that less. I have CPAs on my staff that struggle every year to get enough CPE.

[Adam:] I see. Anything you can think of that would be better if they could do it?

[Mary:] I have-, oh, go ahead.

[Melissa:] I would like to see more career development, more in the sense of, like, the resources that they can provide, like, more coaching and mentoring, and events and training and stuff like that.

[Adam:] Okay.

[Mary:] I was off of the ListServe for quite a while, when I started working up in Sonoma County, because I wasn't doing some of the same things at that level, and I was tired of all the emails, and then recently, I went back on it to ask for an RFP for a building renovation, and I was shocked at the number of emails I got from other things. It's not just the, kind of, one where you can take the rule and put it over there and to the side, and the ones from members. The vendor, just, if they could find some way to make it so that you don't get all of the extra fluff when you're on the ListServe, because it just really made it so that it was harder for me to get some of the actual meat of my email, because there was so much extra stuff.

[Adam:] Okay.



[Bob:] Well I park it in a separate directory.

[Mary:] You can do that for the members, but not for the vendors.

[Bob:] Oh, okay.

[Adam:] You get a lot of vendor emails, okay.

[Mary:] Yes, I'm with you on that other one, yes.

[Adam:] So I think we have a sense of how the organization helps you individually. Is there a specific thing you can point to and say how the organization adds value to your organization, to your agency? If you were, you know, trying to justify the dos, or suggest, you know, 'This is the big takeaway, this is what our agency gets out of it?

' [Kevin:] What just popped up, if you do have a comprehensive annual financial report, it can be reviewed by CSMFO staff. The GFOA has that as well, too, and there's also the Budget Award.

[Mary:] The Innovation Award.

[Kevin:] So, the Innovation Award. Talking about getting really good kudos with your board is if you bring back that some document you produced has gained an award certificate, or at least an award of excellence, or a certification, that brings it beyond yourself, and brings good credibility, and board members love knowing that they've got an award for anything.

[Mary:] Well I also think it, kind of, helps them cover themselves, because this report has been peer reviewed. When you've gotten the award twenty years in a row, it's not like it's that big a thing, but when you bring up the fact, okay, this report has been significant peer reviewed, and it was acceptable, then they can, kind of, go, 'Okay, somebody who really knows how to read these things, besides just us, has looked at it and says it passes muster.'

[Adam:] Janna, anything that added value to your agency, to your city?

[Janna:] Well I think, well, this is on a lower scale, but there are seven of us that are there for my agency, and I feel like this has helped us work together as a team, because we all break off into different sessions, then we meet for lunch, and we talk about what we've learned, and how



we can help the agency when we get back to the office. So I think that's really helped us build on our teamworking skills.

[Adam:] Okay, anybody else?

[Bob:] I definitely think that it helps with career development for a number of staff coming in with no government experience, and so the individual trainings, the basic accounting class, the intermediate accounting, very helpful, then having them come to this, is again extremely helpful to them in their growth.

[Adam:] Okay.

[Kevin:] Next step.

[Mary:] I think it also lets them become part of the governmental accounting world, you know what I mean? It definitely becomes a pretty close knit group as you come, somebody leaves here and pops up there, and then you start really knowing your industry.

[Adam:] Okay. In front of you, if you want to grab this sheet of paper and turn it over, it's a list of CSMFO's top strategic priorities, some of them, and some others that aren't on this list, but take a look at it, and if you can identify the priorities that are most important to you. Maybe think of things that are missing, there's a pen there if you want. Maybe, you know, circle the ones that are critical and really important, maybe cross out the ones you don't care so much about, then make a note about things that, maybe, aren't on the list. This is, you know, should these be priorities for CSMFO? Should there be something else there?

[Debra:] So you want us to rank them?

[Adam:] However you want to do it, just to take 45 seconds and decide what's important and what isn't. Alright, so who's got new technology high on their list?

[Melissa:] I do.

[Adam:] One.

[Bob:] I do.

[Adam:] Two. Alright. Who's got branding and outreach and promoting CSMFO relatively high? One, two, three. Who's got formalize chapter structures? Alright, who's got outreach to



potential new members? Alright, who's got volunteer utilization and appreciation? One, two, three, four, five, alright, and who's got develop student engagement plan? One, and who's got develop orientation package for new existing members? One, two.

[Mary:] A half. I'm, kind of, there.

[Adam:] Okay, I'm going to give it to you, I'm going to give it a three. So let's go over each of these real quick. New technology, what's important about new technology? What does that mean to you?

[Melissa:] I think because we're in an age where technology is always changing, and there are always more efficient ways to do things. I think it's just important to bring it out and see how other people are tackling new technology and systems and everything like that.

[Mary:] Is this technology for CSMFO itself?

[Adam:] I mean, organizationally, yes.

[Mary:] The guidebook and the fancy magazine, and all the online registrations and calendars, they've come a long way.

[Adam:] Okay. Talking about branding and outreach and promoting CSMFO, why is that important?

[Debra:] Just the name alone. I mean, try to say, remember it, CSMFO, and they're like, 'What is it?' 'You know, you have to, kind of, explain a little more, but I think then they understand, 'What does it do?' 'Then you have to go through the explanation, and it seems to me, especially in, you know, finance, the other people would know this organization, but apparently in government they don't. I've been in government, like, four years, before that I was private sector. So coming in, I'm, like, 'What's this group?' 'I was just told to join, I go, 'Okay,' and then start learning more about it, and then talking to others, and in my area, I don't think they quite know more about, that it's available.

[Adam:] Why would it be helpful, or why would it be good, if they branded and people knew? Why would it be better if people knew about it?

[Debra:] I think it would give it more support and legitimacy, because I think one thing, and I don't know if you agree, but in the finance world, you have, it's difficult where if you're operations, they see things where finance, they don't really. So the ideas, I think, with finance



people you hear a lot of times is, 'Oh, you just do, when you do, just, your invoicing.' You're, like, 'Okay,' or, 'You're sitting there waiting for them to do something and then you're, like, and then you get your work,' and you go, 'No, I'm here before you're even born,' in a sense, because finance is needed to get ready to structure the financing and come in, we're there at the height, and then we're there when it's, you know, dying off and going to be closed down. So I think it'll give it more of a legitimacy.

[Adam:] Okay. No one chose formalizing chapter structures, so we'll move on from there. Outreach to potential new members, why is that important?

[Mary:] I think that's, kind of, I think it's part of the branding. I think they, kind of, go hand in hand a little bit, and I know, you know, I've been in the chapter chairs, and the chapters can be great ways to meet people, and we worked on, I hope it's done by now, I've been a little bit removed from CSMFO since I moved to Santa Rose. We were working on a pamphlet to give out to people, but it's really hard to get new members if they don't know that it exists, and you can have big organizations where one or two people know about it, but the rest of them don't know about it. So getting that branding and finding ways to, you know, let new, potential new members know what they're going to get out of it has always, I think, really, been a challenge.

[Janna:] To piggyback on that, I think that, well, because I'm new to government also, I've been in the private sector for a long time, and I think it would have been helpful, like, in college, like, during career day, when they have different organizations come out, if CSMFO would have been there, because I think that would have been a deciding factor, knowing that there is another organization out there that could help you in the public sector. You know, that you have this group of individuals that all come together, and they're all there to learn and network. So I think that would have been helpful.

[Adam:] Okay.

[Mary:] One thing we talked about doing, I think it was in Berkeley, but we didn't get, I think, we didn't get chosen, because they have Google, and other people who wanted to go and have panel discussions with the graduates at different things. I think the government people didn't, we tried, but I think the government one was not, they didn't find enough room on their agenda for it. Maybe that could be looked at again, because I think there are some interesting things to talk about.

[Adam:] Volunteering utilization and, that should be appreciation, why is that important? What makes that relevant?



[Mary:] Recognition. Everybody wants to, if you're going to have them come back, you're going to want to let them know you appreciate what they've done.

[Adam:] Anyone else?

[Kevin:] I was thinking, I guess, I liked it too, is that probably, at my stage in career, I should be, really, volunteering more and serving other agencies more in some capacity, but other than, like, reviewing a CAFR, I'm not too sure what else I would do. I should probably get involved in my local chapter, like you've done, but I don't know if I'm needed, or if there is a need for it, but I could probably be guilted into doing it more, and it would be a good thing.

[Mary:] Do you attend your local chapter?

[Kevin:] No, it's a bit of a hike away from us, during a lunchtime.

[Mary:] That's been a real dilemma over the years, too, is because they thought about restructuring them, and they tried to do it, you know, close by the different populations, and then we had different things when I was there, but we moved the meeting around from month to month, so that it wasn't always in the same spot, close to just the same people. You know, but those are the kinds of things you could talk to you chapter chair. I think that the chapters are definitely, kind of, the meat of the whole organization. Everybody gets together here once a year, but the chapters can be really very positive, very enjoyable and very good for your career development.

[Melissa:] I think that goes, also, back to the outreach to new members, because if you're a new member, you don't know about your chapter meetings. You're new to government and you don't know about the program, then you, kind of, go under the radar until later on.

[Mary:] Well, and I think part of it, one of the issues that they've had, and I think they did a really good job of trying to utilize the chapter chairs, you know, because sometimes they can languish. If you don't have some good leadership, because if you joined, and when you joined CSMFO, you should have a fixed chapter, by virtue of where you are, and you should be on that chapter's ListServe, as well as the overall ListServe, so that you're getting notification of meetings.

[Adam:] How many of you have been to a chapter meeting in the last twelve months? One, two, three, maybe.

[Kevin:] Maybe, maybe not. I have.



[Mary:] My chapter has totally been not doing anything, and I'm at the point in my career, I'm not ready to go and, I'm not doing this now.

[Adam:] Okay. Student development engagement plan, I think you, kind of, explained what your thinking there.

[Janna:] Yes.

[Adam:] It's being on campus and, kind of, making it clear there's a government option, and it's real, I guess. So a development and orientation package for new and existing members, what would that look like? How would that be beneficial? Who mentioned that?

[Melissa:] I think it would just, it would need to show, like, all the benefits that come into it, how you can network, what are the benefits of the networking, you know? You can reach out to everybody else and see, like, if you need help with requesting information or getting policies, that kind of stuff, while at the same time, showing that, you know, you're a part of this chapter, here are, like, chapter meetings, you know, we do the annual conference. Stuff like that, trainings, just an overview of everything that's provided.

[Debra:] Like the annual conference, when I first signed up, I was trying to figure out, 'Well how does it work? ' I didn't know, did I have to come to pre-register and then register at the class I go? They were, like, 'Oh no, you just come and you scan and you buck.' So I wasn't quite sure how it was laid out. I tried to read through the emails and such, but it was just a little, I read the brochure, like, 'Well, do I sign up for it? ' It was just a little-,

[Kevin:] That's a good point.

[Debra:] Yes, I just showed up and it worked.

[Adam:] Okay.

[Mary:] After you go to so many, and that part hasn't changed, you, kind of, take it for granted, but I remember going back the first time and I was, kind of, thinking about, 'Yes, how does it tell? ' I don't think they tell you about that anywhere.

[Melissa:] They don't, because this is my first conference, and my director told me how the whole process works, because I was, like, 'Well how does it work? ' So it's not explained.



[Adam:] Okay. So looking at CSMFO and the potential assisting your organization's succession planning, is that a thing? Do you think that CSMFO is helping with your organization's succession planning, or no? Basically, in the student engagement, recruitment, you know, the skills and whatever, the things they can deliver to you. Is that, do you go to CSMFO for that sort of thing?

[Bob:] I think it's, kind of, an automatic benefit of the career development of what CSM folk does.

[Adam:] Okay, so you would say that it does provide succession planning benefits?

[Bob:] Yes, because it's growing those staff that came in new to government, and existing ones that now, maybe, are assuming more leadership roles, and I think it's, kind of, an automatic function that's already there.

[Adam:] Do you agree?

[Debra:] I think there's some, because if you're, now that I would take back some of the issues that I was unsure of, now I've taken some of those seminars, okay, I can now bring it back to my organization and let them know, and then they go, 'Okay, there's something to look at,' and they can start growing and get their career developing as well.

[Kevin:] I would say that if it was more formalized, because I think a succession planning is, you're helping, say, the accountant one to some day become the controller, the CFO, ultimately. Maybe a more formalized succession program would be helpful. For example, you know, I get the emails about this class going on, or this thing going on here or there. Maybe if they were structured as 'bring your staff through', you know, 'consider bringing your staff through this program of education as career development, succession planning'.

[Bob:] A curriculum.

[Kevin:] I must say, I never really thought about CSMFO specifically for succession planning. I thought of it as staff development, which contributes to that, but nothing formalized.

[Adam:] Right. Do you think of somebody else as succession planning? Is there some other organization, or some other-,

[Kevin:] No.



[Adam:] No?

[Kevin:] No.

[Melissa:] I have to agree. I don't feel that it is, like, a succession planning. It's not telling me how I go from an entry level accountant to senior level to a management position. There's nowhere that it really gives you that. It gives you more of topics that are going on, that are affecting cities and, kind of, again, back to networking, but not a true succession plan.

[Adam:] I don't know the answer to this, but perhaps that might cost some money, to develop a curriculum like that. Would that be of interest? Do you think there's-, does your organization, does your agency, have the resources to, perhaps, invest in something like that for your staff?

[Melissa:] I think it's more of a need now, because of everybody that's retiring and the lack of new talent coming in, that it's more of a need to really say, as an entry level accountant, here's how we can move you up to management, and give you that.

[Adam:] So do you think the resources are there to pay for it? Janna, you're saying yes.

[Janna:] Yes, our organization currently sends people to GFOA. They have, like, accounting academies and budget academies, so we send people out to those academies, and it's, like, a week long, and it's pretty expensive, but-,

[Mary:] I don't know that CSMFO wants to compete with GFOA on some of those programs.

[Janna:] Yes.

[Mary:] I also think that there are a lot of different agencies around here. I don't know that CSMFO wants to get into the business of saying, 'If you take our class, you will get promoted,' because I don't know that there's their-, I think that's a little bit beyond their reach. I think they could provide, you know, underlying information, but I don't know that they want to get into, exactly, you see what I mean?

[Adam:] Sure, yes.

[Bob:] You know, kind of, related to this would be, and I never really thought about it before, GFOA offers the CPFO certification that's really, I think there are still less than 1000 people that have passed all the exams and have that certification. I think it would be, kind of, neat if CSMFO developed some kind of certification. I've been able to hire some CPAs to come on



staff, but some of my people, very capable, very dedicated, doing it a long time, they'll never do the CPA route, just because it's a hurdle to get over. I don't know that they really want to do the CPFO, because there's a huge time commitment and a lot of test taking, and you've got to get to the test site to take the test. The nearest thing I can think that's comparable is the Association of Governmental Accountants offers a certification, but they're more oriented towards federal government. It would be nice to develop a California, certified California financial accountant certification of some sort. Not make it too big a

hurdle, but it would be a way to help people get something they would be recognized for, and frankly, it differentiates from those people that are willing to invest more, to become more knowledgeable, to become more valuable to their organization, from those that are just, kind of, coasting along.

[Kevin:] I love that.

[Adam:] Anyone agree.

[Kevin:] I agree.

[Janna:] Yes.

[Mary:] I agree, I'm a little bit, still, concerned with the competing against the GFAO. I don't know if they did this, this year, but they used to, at the annual conference, have a representative from GFOA who came out and proctored tests.

[Bob:] They usually do.

[Mary:] So I don't know if they're having it now.

[Kevin:] They do.

[Mary:] So, you know, it's not like it's impossible to get to those sites when you're in California.

[Kevin:] Right, right.

[Mary:] So I think that it might be that they have considered some of this, they could promote that more, they could offer specific training for those tests, because those tests are hard.

[Bob:] That's important, yes.



[Kevin:] I want something easier, that's my problem.

[Bob:] I did, you know, I've got a lot of \*inaudible\* people.

[Kevin:] I want someone to lower the bar.

[Bob:] I would like to help them get up a couple of steps.

[Melissa:] I think, going back, kind of, not necessarily, like, competing with GFOA, because if you've really taken any of their classes, unless you go to the academy, I haven't been to any of those, but the class is a very broad overview, like, the preparing the CAFR, it's just a very broad overview of what's in the CAFR. Maybe CSMFO can provide one that's, like, 'This is why we're preparing the footnotes, and this is how you prepare the footnotes.'

[Mary:] They do, their intro to governmental accounting definitely takes the CAFR from beginning to end, that's its whole purpose in life. So if you have it, you probably don't need it, but it's not a bad class just to go to, just to go, to have been through the class, even if you don't, if you know how to do your own CAFR.

[Debra:] So is this GFOA, or we have this?

[Mary:] That's CSMFO.

[Debra:] Okay, we do, okay.

[Mary:] They go, they have one a month all over the state.

[Bob:] I agree with Melissa, that introductory and the intermediate one are good, but they're very fast, very overview, very high level, and I think they could augment that with additional ones that cover more of the nuts and bolts of how to do certain aspects of the CAFR, or certain aspects of governmental accounting that we face.

[Adam:] Okay.

[Mary:] I really like the idea of classes to help people get that CPFO, I think that that's something that people would be really, there might be more of them, because right now I don't know who, where exactly you would go to get that kind of training.



[Kevin:] Right, you'd have forced discipline. Like, if I knew I had to be at a class, okay, I'll do it. If I knew that I really had to do it on the weekends, I'll never do it.

[Bob:] Right.

[Adam:] Okay. So CSMFO has multiple major themes, what the organization does. Training is certainly one of them, advocacy is another. Between the two, which do you think should be the greater focus, and is there something else that the organization should be doing, that they're not doing, you know, broadly? Janna?

[Janna:] Well since I'm still new to government, I think that training is important, that should be number one for CSMFO to concentrate on, is the training, because that helps us all become better servants to our cities and our communities, and it helps us understand the financial statements more, it helps us understand the implementations. For me, personally, I took on a new role, so coming here, the training on capital assets was really helpful, so I really think that that should be the primary focus on CSMFO.

[Adam:] Okay, does everybody agree that training should be number one? Does anybody think that advocacy should be higher on the list?

Training (x3).

[Debra:] Training, because you could then be the advocate. 'Oh, where did you learn this?' 'Oh, I learned it through the C, and I am going to say this right this time, CSMFO training.' 'Oh, what is it?' 'Then you can, kind of, they can see themselves.

[Adam:] Right. I mean, I think advocacy, I think part of that might be thinking about, you know, at the state level.

[Debra:] Oh, okay, you mean more on the political side.

[Bob:] Political, regulatory, okay.

[Adam:] Yes, I mean, policy, really.

[Kevin:] Coming from a water agency, there is already that infrastructure, there are a lot. ACWA, AWWA, CSDA, CASA, all kinds of stuff. So I think, at least my view, at least in water, there is a lot of advocacy already.



[Bob:] I think the League of California Cities is more of our advocacy agency, and I think we partner. So I would say CSMFO, continuing to partner with the League makes, really, sense.

[Kevin:] I agree.

[Mary:] That sounds real good.

[Adam:] Okay.

[Mary:] I think they have, you know, they can't do everything. I'd, kind of, hate to have them get deluded from some of the programs that they have by trying to take on a real significant advocacy role.

[Adam:] It seems, kind of, unanimous that advocacy should take a back seat, or not even be a priority at all?

[Bob:] I think there's an element, because I think as finance officers, we come at it, sometimes, from a different viewpoint than others. So I think that, again, supporting the League is a great way for CSMFO to have impact and help shape some of the financial issues.

[Adam:] Does everybody see the-, well, I mean, not everybody is with a city, but does everybody see the League as an advocacy organization that speaks to what you care about?

[Mary:] Well I think you've, kind of, got a point, in that I don't know that the League really always has the focus or the knowledge that the finance people have. They're all the city managers, and those type of people, so it seems to me like if there could be a way to funnel some of the information up to that group, that could be really helpful.

[Bob:] Yes, I agree with that. It does need good support and advocacy from the financial side of things.

[Adam:] Okay.

[Mary:] It would be interesting to see how they really develop that, because I haven't seen much of it in the past.

[Kevin:] I'll give you one example. So water, there are a lot of water districts in the city, so there is a bill, SB 1998, that will affect, well, SB 623, even sooner, will affect what you put, you might have to put something on your water to help fund a low income program. Well that's huge.



Now we hear about it, because we have a public affairs person, or someone who is involved with that, but if I didn't have that, and CSMFO said, 'Hey, by the way, this will affect all water. This will affect, financially, your agency, or how you bill water,' I'd love to know that. That might be the extent, they might direct me to, where to provide opinion.

[Adam:] So that piece of legislation, there was no alert from CSMFO on that subject?

[Kevin:] Not that I know of, and if it was in the magazine, I'm sorry, I didn't read it.

[Adam:] Right.

[Kevin:] If I got an email, kind of, some sort of an email alert, it would want to be to all finance directors of a water agency, this is coming down the line, if you haven't heard about it, here are some links.

[Adam:] Okay.

[Melissa:] I could see that being just, like, a useful tool in general, new stuff that's coming out that might be affecting, and just referring it to, like, GFOA or League of Cities, just in general. I can see that being helpful.

[Adam:] Okay. Should CSMFO have a smartphone app? Would that be helpful? Would you use it?

[Bob:] I wouldn't particularly. I have enough intrusion into my personal life, and my computer at work is a great way for CSMFO to reach out to me.

[Adam:] Alright, anybody disagree with, is there something amazing that they could put on your phone with an app that would give you great resource, information, a way of communicating, something in an app?

[Mary:] Probably the best thing you could get in the app would be the directory, but most of the other things that I go to their website for, I'm certainly not going to read the magazine on my phone, and we read enough emails, if you can get those either way, but the directory and the calendar.

[Kevin:] That would be great if you're going to a new place, and you want someone to treat you to lunch.



[Adam:] I'm in Tracy.

[Kevin:] I need a place to stay, where are you living?

[Adam:] Great.

[Debra:] The only thing on that could be as, you know, myself, if I use the guide, I don't use my phone as much, but then there is, up and coming, that it's all phone. They don't want paper, they don't want the email, they want that app, and they can go through. So we have to weigh, you know, with what's coming, with more experience, to now that the group would like.

[Adam:] Would you use the directory if it was on an app?

[Bob:] I wouldn't. I can already get to it.

[Mary:] I could, possibly, I could definitely see myself here with somebody going and talking about something and saying, 'Well who's in Pasadena? I don't know who they are.' 'Well let's call them up.' Okay, then I can see that being helpful.

[Adam:] Okay, Melissa, do you agree?

[Melissa:] I can see it from, like, younger generations, as they're coming at that, yes. Just, like Debra was saying, with the whole conference, and having it all in one app, as opposed to downloading another app. I could see it being useful.

[Adam:] Right, so it's also having conference schedule and things like that?

[Mary:] Well the guidebook thing here is quite cool.

[Debra:] Yes, that helped schedule, do your schedule then just getting to everything.

[Melissa:] I mean, if it was, like, instead of having a CSMFO app and a guidebook app, if they were combined, then you don't have two apps on your phone.

[Mary:] You don't have to download that extra one. It would also, you know, like you say, for the younger people, you'd say you want to go to, you're going to talk to somebody from Pasadena, you hit the button, there are my directions, or here it is, I call them.



[Melissa:] Could be a way to send out, again, back to the whole chapter meetings, it could be a way to send out a reminder, like, 'Hey, here's what's going on in our chapter,' kind of thing.

[Mary:] Text communications by subgroups, if they could be able to develop some significant subgroups, could be helpful. Could also be a real invasion, a lot of different texts.

[Adam:] Okay. There was also a mention of a calendar on the app. Some of you are going to say no, but would you use a calendar on the app?

[Bob:] I might, but, you know, my CSMFO meeting is on my calendar already, so I don't need another calendar.

[Adam:] Anybody else think the calendar component could be useful.

[Debra:] I think so. If you're thinking of something, again, if you're looking for one spot, or I forget, then I'm, like, 'Where do I go? ' I go find my email, and then I realize, 'Oh, there it is.' That's for me.

[Adam:] Okay. Let's talk about the magazine. It's come up a few times already. What you like to see more or less of? What type of content is useful to you? Let's start with that. What would you like to see more or less of, what do you really appreciate?

[Melissa:] I don't think I've honestly ever seen a CSMFO magazine.

[Adam:] Okay, alright. Debra?

[Debra:] I think the same thing, I've never read it.

[Adam:] Alright.

[Bob:] It's now electronic.

[Kevin:] I would pay more to have it printed. I just don't like to read magazines on a screen. It's fashionable or whatever, but I was disappointed when they went from the print to the online.

[Adam:] Okay.



[Mary:] The print one was a stable for ever and ever, and, you know, it looked the same way, and it was, like, 'Oh, yay,' and you looked at the back and that's where the jobs were, and then it got so fancy. It feels, you know-,

[Kevin:] Oh, it's any time now.

[Mary:] It's, totally, and at first I didn't like it, because I was wanting \*inaudible\*, but now that I've gotten more comfortable with full-screening and turning the pages, and some of those little skills, I like it, and I like the content that they're putting in it, because I think it's interesting that they've got a topic, and they can do a whole magazine somewhat surrounding that topic from a lot of different perspectives?

[Adam:] Janna, do you read it?

[Janna:] I've never read it.

[Adam:] Okay, and you?

[Bob:] I read it, and it's both printed and electronic. It's a very high quality document, I think it's really valuable to us, I think they do a great job, and I'm okay, because of the cost savings with it being electronic.

[Adam:] Okay.

[Debra:] You can print it, and it just folds nicely into a printed copy correctly. It's not, because sometimes, when you pull the magazine, you print it, it turns out to be, like, you get half of it chopped off.

[Bob:] Yes, I've never tried to print it, I just read it on my monitor.

[Mary:] I'm wondering why you guys haven't seen it.

[Melissa:] I don't think that-,

[Kevin:] They used to give out free examples, one at the conference, so that people could find out about it, but I don't know how you would know about it.

[Melissa:] I don't, yes, I don't think I've ever received an email saying it, and if I have, then it's probably gotten mixed up with all the other emails that we're receiving, because, I mean, every



time somebody sends out a request for information, you know, it goes to everybody on the list, so I can see how that could be an issue.

[Adam:] Is there-, go ahead.

[Bob:] You can go to the website and view the back issues.

[Melissa:] Again, if you don't know about it.

[Bob:] No, I agree, they should be sending a notification to everyone, so that they know about it.

[Mary:] Well another thing they should be doing, I think, is having copies \*inaudible\* the chapter meetings.

[Janna:] Oh, that's a good idea.

[Kevin:] That is a good idea.

[Debra:] Do you have, like, do they have a separate email that you can set up to be, like, the email that you have in my name at the CSMFO dot org, or do they have something like that, that you can set up, so maybe we don't get so much at work, but you can go in and download what, maybe, people are connecting? I'm not sure.

[Bob:] I don't know.

[Melissa:] I don't think so.

[Mary:] What Bob was talking about is this, you know, having another different directory to put those emails in, so you can get time to go and do that, but that really is a drag, that you guys haven't been able to see the magazines, because they work real hard on it.

[Adam:] So let's assume you're about to read the magazine, and what would you hope to see in a CSMFO magazine? What would the content be like? Is it in depth on one specific, you know, subject matter? Is it just quick tidbits to, kind of, give you a flavor of what's happening in the industry? Is it more human interest, you know, what some finance director accomplished in their city and all about how they did it, or is it more newsy? What would you want to see if you actually did read it?



[Melissa:] I think it would be a good combination of everything, so that you can, kind of, see, like, this city is doing this, while this is still a hot topic for everybody, you know. I would like to see just a good mix.

[Adam:] Okay. Debra?

[Debra:] If they had, like, a focused, you know, article, then you have up and coming bills or bonds or votes that are coming up.

[Adam:] So legislative kind of things?

Yes (x2).

[Adam:] Okay. Janna, what kind of content?

[Janna:] No long articles, because I think that we're all busy, and I wouldn't have the time to read a long article, but if it was a bunch of, like, short little articles on hot topics and things like that, that we could skim through, that would be really helpful.

[Adam:] Okay.

[Bob:] I'd piggyback on what she said and say, I think some of the articles deserve to be in depth. Maybe make sure there's an executive summary.

[Adam:] Okay.

[Kevin:] A link, with links, maybe, to get more information.

[Janna:] Yes.

[Adam:] Is there anyone that wants to dive into a six-page article that is very fine print? I mean, I don't want to make it sound unattractive, but, I mean, you could really get a lot of content into a longer article, an in-depth piece. It sounds like you probably just wouldn't get to it.

[Bob:] They're written by volunteer writers, for the most part, I suspect.

[Mary:] Yes, but I do think that they're edited, so there are different writing styles, but they're, the ones that I've read, I haven't felt embarrassed, ever, for an author.



[Melissa:] I would think it would depend, too, on what the subject is, and why they're going into such depth, that it would be worth the long article as opposed to just an executive summary. So I think it would really have to depend on what the content is.

[Adam:] So if it was something that you were truly interested in, or highly relevant, you might go through it.

[Melissa:] Right.

[Adam:] Okay. Alright, so let's come back to home here. How valuable is the annual conference, and what would you like to see more or less of at this thing? Kevin?

[Kevin:] It is very valuable. This particular year, it seems like there is an even greater variety of topics that are being covered.

[Adam:] Variety is good.

[Kevin:] Variety is good. I'm more of a fan of, like, the Tuesday sessions, because they're more in-depth, if you want to have that. I wouldn't mind seeing that even during the week. So, for example, there's the one on public speaking. He mentioned, the gentleman said, like, he could even talk about doing a full day one of that, but generally, that would all be on Tuesday, is when they do their full day ones. Well why not a full day on either Wednesday or Thursday? Frankly, I'm at the point where I would rather get a lot more in-depth content on just one subject than all these other topics I've heard before along the way. I'd rather get more in.

[Adam:] Anybody agree or disagree with this idea of a focused one day full session?

[Mary:] Isn't that what they have for the pre-Conference trainers?

[Kevin:] Right, but I was hoping that they would also do that on Wednesday and Thursday.

[Mary:] I think that they're trying to break them up from, have a little bit of a mix.

[Adam:] What do you think? Would you want some more all day sessions?

[Melissa:] I think it would depend on what the content is. Like, the public speaking one, I agree, I think that should be an all day thing, I think that would be more, like, the career development side of things, and how that's relevant, but, I mean, being my first time at the conference, I do find some value in some of the topics, and some of the topics I don't.



[Adam:] Okay, Debra, what about you?

[Debra:] I can see this point where it depends on when people fly in, or have the time, if they have, maybe that it just depends, though, what type of topic, if there's that all day, that they can have, maybe, on a Wednesday or a Thursday, rather than you have to go to the Tuesday. Now you could have it Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, or maybe there's something you might like, here's some on Thursday. So you don't have to be all four days if you can't afford it.

[Adam:] Okay, how about you Janna?

[Janna:] I agree with that, like, the public speaking, I think that should be an all day offering, for each day, I think, because that would be beneficial to everybody.

[Adam:] Oh, so just, kind of, replicate the program each day?

[Janna:] Yes, I think so.

[Kevin:] Right.

Yes (x2).

[Adam:] So you can participate, whichever one day you want to pull away from.

[Janna:] Yes.

[Kevin:] Here's an example, like, I mean, obviously, water rates, I love water rates. I really don't like water rates, not since Facebook are nextdoor. So I was with a couple of people, we taught all day on Tuesday, and then also there is one on Wednesday, but the Wednesday one we're at was an hour and fifteen minutes. You are not going to really end up getting much on water rates in an hour and fifteen. Maybe if we had that rates one also on another day, you could do it, because some topics really just aren't made for an hour and fifteen minutes. They're only there to create need, so that you hire the consultant who's speaking, right?

[Melissa:] It's true.



[Kevin:] So it's to create need, or awareness. The smaller sessions are there to create awareness. The real in-depth training, of course, are either two sessions, like this public speaking one, or the Tuesday ones. I think there could be more of that.

[Adam:] Bob, what's your feeling on that all day scenario?

[Bob:] You know, I'm hearing a lot of interest in it, and so maybe some form out of that does make sense, although I'll say, having gone to this for a number of years, I think the group has done an excellent job of putting together a pretty flexible and valuable program, so I'm pretty happy with the present format, but I'm hearing there is interest in more of these longer, more comprehensive sessions.

[Adam:] Okay.

[Debra:] When they pay, I'm, kind of, confused. Weren't there some that were paying the Tuesday, you had to pay for the day?

[Kevin:] You had to pay.

[Debra:] Was that because it was all day, or was that because it as a Tuesday?

[Melissa:] It was a pre-conference.

[Kevin:] All I know is I didn't get paid. The presenters don't get paid, so I think it's probably to pay for rental and everything, the food.

[Debra:] Yes, oh, okay, sorry, that's where I got confused, where some weren't, but then that Tuesday, okay.

[Adam:] So Kevin was the only one so far that said, specifically, that he values, highly, the conference. Anyone agree or disagree with that?

I totally agree (x2). I agree (x2).

[Adam:] Okay. We get a sense that, maybe, some more all day sessions, kind of, focused in on some topic, is good. Anything else there should be more of, or is there anything that shouldn't be involved in the conference that you get now? Is there some way it's set up, or something that you don't need?



[Melissa:] Back to Kevin's idea of the all day conference, maybe not necessarily an all day conference, but, like, a half day, that just focusses on, like, a topic for half a day, and it really dives into it, I think that would be beneficial too. In my personal opinion, I don't really care that we have two keynote speakers in one day, I think that's just a little-, I'd rather take another class and learn something else than have to sit through two keynote speakers.

[Adam:] Okay. What didn't we get to talk about? What's just hanging on your mind, saying, 'I wish I could tell someone about this,' when it comes to CSMFO, I mean, specifically CSMFO, I mean. If you have something else you need to talk about, you can chat afterwards.

[Debra:] I'm, like, 'Well, you really want to know? We'll talk about this later instead.'

[Adam:] What's hanging on your mind? Mary?

[Mary:] I think the conference is really great, and I know how much work goes into it, I know how much work goes into the program development and all of this stuff. I think that they've just done a great job over the years, but what I'm hearing from you guys is, I don't know that it's annual conference half day and all day training, you just want all day and half day training of different kinds than just the intermediate and the intro accounting. It sounds like there are other things that could be done in the way they're doing them now. Maybe in Northern California, Southern California, volunteer trainers, but, and I know that they would want to do that if they feel that there is a market. So maybe what they should be doing is getting topics, and see if some things really shake out.

[Adam:] Okay.

[Janna:] That's a good idea.

[Adam:] Debra, what else is on your mind, CSMFO wise?

[Debra:] I was thinking, well, if some of the limitations are because of not having enough people, or whatever, volunteer, get that reach out to, when we talked about here, that reach out to volunteer, and say, 'Hey, we'd like you to come and assist us,' and you don't have to be a subject matter expert to, you know, set up a room, you know what I mean? Just whatever they need is, you see the speakers, but, like, am I at that, like, capacity? Is that all they're looking for, or are they looking for you? I just want to know what they would need, and then see if we could fit and help them, so that they can provide more of that training.



[Mary:] For the annual conference, they always need a moderator, which you don't need to have any-, to me, for that, you just need to be able to read the introductions, and some of those are not fun. Then they also have room monitors, and they have different people to just stuff bags, those bags that you get, you know, and schlep stuff around. So yes, there's definitely some \*inaudible\* duties to be spread around.

[Melissa:] I think that goes back to what Kevin was saying with the volunteering, like, it's not put out there that they need the volunteers for this stuff. So if you don't know that the volunteering is needed, to help with the event, then we don't know that we could be of a value. So I think reaching out and saying, hey, we need help volunteering at the chapter meeting, or at the conference, or teaching, or something, I think that would help us as well. Then we're saying, 'Yes, we volunteered at this event.'

[Mary:] I think part of that comes through the host committee. So if it's in your area, and, you know, it's going to be near your town, I think that that's, kind of, where it reverberates. I don't know that they often, if it's-,

[Kevin:] I didn't even know, I didn't know that it would be, and I'm here in Riverside, that they needed any help. Now maybe they didn't, because they had plenty of folks.

[Mary:] You got tapped to do an all-day.

[Kevin:] I always do, I don't know why.

[Adam:] Janna, did we miss anything?

[Janna:] Well adding, for volunteering, like, how do you become a volunteer? I have no idea, what if I'm in Sacramento for a week, and I just want to volunteer somewhere at CSMFO, if there is an event going on? How do I know that they need one? Is it, you know, on their site?

[Mary:] Could be part of the app.

[Janna:] That could be something helpful, I would have the app for that.

[Adam:] What didn't we get through today, Bob?

[Bob:] I'm really pleased CMSFO, so I think you did a good job. I think they're doing a good job.



[Adam:] Okay.

[Melissa:] I think, one more comment, sorry. I think, going back to the whole new technology thing, is putting more information on their website. Like, when we send out requests for policies and procedures, maybe having them link it back to their website, of that information, so that it's just readily available, instead of having to go to the ListServe and sending it all out.

[Mary:] While I was just looking for the magazine, which I couldn't find, I found a resources section, that had a listing tab, that had all of the stuff they'd had recently.

[Bob:] A lot of people don't post.

[Melissa:] Yes, I think if you send out a request for, let's say, policies for wire transfers. It's not necessarily posted on their website, but it's in the email, because everybody's replied back, and then they'll say, 'Here's what I've received.' Taking what you've received and actually putting it on the website so it's just readily there.

[Adam:] So create, like, a knowledge base.

[Melissa:] Right.

[Adam:] You know, I think, maybe, the counter to that would be, perhaps, you know, that ListServe is, kind of, you know, it's all public, right? Everybody's in public agency, but I think there is some sense that you're, kind of, talking amongst yourselves. If you were to take that and put that on the website, maybe people would be more reticent to respond, because then, you know, they're giving \*inaudible\*. Is anybody concerned about that?

[Mary:] I don't think so. I think if somebody responds to you with a policy, or a link to a policy, or a reference to a policy, it's all part of the whole transparency thing.

[Adam:] A copy MRP, or something like that.

[Bob:] I think there should be public records.

[Mary:] People are proud, I think, to provide these things that they've worked really hard on to others, and I think that's one of the things that makes this whole type of an organization special.

[Adam:] So is everybody okay with creating a knowledge base from the ListServe responses?



[Mary:] I think there was a process a while ago, you know, I haven't been on the ListServe for a long term, and this is, I think, a long term issue. I mean, they've had rules that they put out and, if they're going to do things, and you get these kinds of answers, then you're supposed to do this. I haven't seen it for years, so I don't know if it's still-, obviously, it's not out there.

[Bob:] They need to reinforce it, because what you're supposed to do when you get all those responses, the recipient of all the responses is supposed to put them together and post them up to the website.

[Adam:] People usually post it to the group, but they just don't actually post it to the website.

[Bob:] No, they need that loaded up to the website.

[Mary:] I don't quite know what the mechanism is for that, but I know there was something a while ago, but I don't know what's going on with it now.

[Adam:] Well thank you everybody for your time.





## CSMFO BOARD REPORT

---

DATE: March 24, 2018

FROM: Melissa Dixon, Executive Director

SUBJECT: 2018 Program Committee Support Services

### **Background:**

Last year, the Program Committee requested that support services be provided to their committee by paid staff. CSMFO contracted with SMA to provide those services; SMA in turn subcontracted that work to Harriet Commons. The total fee for that scope of services was \$8625.

The number of sessions and speakers from 2017, and on which we based the compensation, is as follows:

2 pre-conference sessions with 4 speakers  
39 breakout (concurrent) sessions with 84 speakers

In 2018, we had the following:

3 pre-conference sessions with 6 speakers  
59 breakout (concurrent) sessions with 144 speakers

In percentage terms, there was a 50% increase in the number of pre-conference sessions, with a corresponding 50% in the number of speakers, and a 51.3% increase in the number of breakout sessions, with a corresponding 71.4% increase in the number of speakers.

### **Recommendation:**

SMA is requesting an additional \$2500 for the unexpected increase in workload for the 2018 Annual Conference services, and have put parameters on the number of speakers and sessions covered under the scope of the contract for the renewal going forward.



## **CSMFO BOARD REPORT**

---

Date: March 22, 2018

FROM: Alberto Preciado, Administration Committee

SUBJECT: Smith Moore & Associates Contract Amendment #4

### **DISCUSSION**

CSMFO has a contract with Smith Moore & Associates to provide Management Services and Meeting Planning Services. The term of this contract was amended by Amendment #2 set to expire in December 2021.

Amendment #3 was approved in August 2017 to provide additional support to the Program Committee. This was a one-year contract to provide support for the 2018 Annual Conference. An extension of the services and negotiation for the compensation was allowed for in the amendment.

Amendment #4 extends the term of the Program Committee support through the 2022 Annual Conference. The compensation is proposed as follows:

2019 conference - \$8,625 (No increase from the 2018 conference)  
2020 conference - \$8,927 (3.5% increase)  
2021 conference - \$9,240 (3.5% increase)  
2022 conference - \$9,565 (3.5% increase)

In the event that the number of sessions at any conference exceeds 45 or the number of speakers exceeds 100, an increased fee may be negotiated.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Board approve the Smith Moore & Associates Contract Amendment #4 for continued supportive services to the CSMFO Program Committee.

**Agreement for Professional Services between  
Smith Moore & Associates and  
California Society of Municipal Finance Officers**

**Amendment #4**

**1. Original Contract:** The original agreement was made and entered into on October 22, 2015 by and between The California Society of Municipal Finance Officers (“CSMFO”) and Smith Moore & Associates (“SMA”) to provide Management Services and Meeting Planning Services for calendar years 2016, 2017, and 2018. The services were provided through a sub-contractual relationship with Harriet Commons, CPA. Amendment #2 would enact the extension options on that contract, effectively extending it through December 31, 2020 retaining the sub-contractual relationship. Amendment #2 enacted the extension options on that contract, effectively extending it through December 31, 2021.

**2. Scope of Additional Work:** Assist the Program Committee with the following tasks:

- Update “call for sessions” form and coordinate posting of “call for sessions” info on the CSMFO website with SMA, with an emphasis both on content of the form and the nature of the output of the session proposals submitted.
- Maintain master file of “call for sessions” submittals.
- Identify appropriate track for each “call for sessions” submittal and distribute to track captains for their review.
- Review overall program content for completeness and identify topics or areas that need to be included.
- Develop inventory of recurring speakers and/or topics, work with track leaders to develop sessions, and coordinate scheduling as needed.
- Work closely with SMA Conference staff.
- Keep track of session open items and responsible person(s) during the course of program development.
- Ensure compliance with program development and conference timelines.
- Maintain contact information for session speakers and moderators.
- Send out speaker confirmation letters.
- Send out moderator confirmation letters.
- Notify unsuccessful “call for session” submitters.
- Assemble speaker bios and transmit to SMA.
- Send out speaker thank-you letters.
- Send out moderator thank-you letters.
- Prepare conference program layout (“event schedule”) for committee review, including assigning concurrent sessions to time slots and rooms.
- Prepare session descriptions for posting to the CSMFO website.
- Prepare periodic updates to session descriptions for posting to the CSMFO website as the program evolves.
- Prepare program content (session descriptions, speakers, moderators, room assignments, dates, and times) for submittal to SMA Conference staff.
- Coordinate and review program content in the Annual Conference program with SMA Conference staff.
- Provide support to Committee Chair for conference site visits, with a focus on program needs.
- Prepare meeting agendas for Committee Chair review.

**3. Compensation:** The total compensation for services detailed in the Scope of Additional Work section will be \$8,625 for the 2019 Annual Conference; \$8,927 for the 2020 Annual Conference; \$9,240 for the 2021 Annual Conference; and \$9565 for the 2022 Annual Conference. Note that while the SMA contract

with CSMFO currently expires December 31, 2021, services for the 2022 Annual Conference will predominantly occur during 2021 and these services will continue through the end of the 2022 Annual Conference regardless of the status of the base contract. Fees are payable upon the completion of each conference.

The fees above include a maximum of 45 sessions and 100 speakers for each Annual Conference. Should either the number of sessions or the number of speakers exceed those maximums, an increase in the fees may be negotiated.

**4. Period of Agreement:** This amendment will be effective April 1, 2018 through the 2022 Annual Conference.

**5. Remaining Provisions of Agreement:** Except as otherwise specifically set forth in this First Amendment, the remaining provisions of the Agreement shall remain in full force and effect. Any change in the sub-contractual relationship should be communicated in advance to the Executive Committee of CSMFO. Should a new provider of these services be necessary under the scope of this contract, CSMFO shall have input into the selection of the new individual.

**EXECUTED:**

Smith Moore & Associates  
By:

California Society of Municipal Finance Officers  
By:

Melissa Dixon  
Partner

Margaret Moggia  
CSMFO President, 2018

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This AGREEMENT (this "Agreement") is effective as of the date the document is signed ("the Effective Date"), by and between The California CPA Education Foundation (CalCPA) and the California Society of Municipal Finance Officers ("CSMFO")

WHEREAS, CSMFO agrees to offer CalCPA Education Foundation webcasts under the following arrangement:

**CalCPA Education Foundation Responsibilities:**

1. Offer full menu of NASBA and California Board of Accountancy-compliant webcasts to CSMFO members at CalCPA member pricing.
2. Provide CSMFO with marketing copy and all required NASBA fields to promote event as well as supply email and print marketing templates and advertisements.
3. Host and administer all webcasts.
4. Provide certificates of completion and conduct evaluations of webcasts.
5. Return 5 percent of paid webcast registrations taken by CalCPA who are CalCPA and CSMFO members on a quarterly basis.
6. Return 20 percent of paid webcast registrations taken by CalCPA who are not CalCPA members but are CSMFO members on a quarterly basis.
7. Return 40 percent of paid webcast registrations taken by CalCPA who use the promotion code "CSMFO"

**CSMFO Responsibilities:**

1. Will promote selected CalCPA offerings to membership or targeted member segment.
2. Will add selected CalCPA Education Foundation offerings to CSMFO's database and promote programs on CSMFO's website within 30 days of the effective date of this agreement.
3. Provide registration and fee collection for webcasts. All webcast pricing must be at the CalCPA member/nonmember rates.
4. Provide an as needed database feed of registrants to CalCPA Education Foundation.
5. Return 60 percent of paid webcast registrations to CalCPA Education Foundation on a quarterly basis with NET 30 terms.

**Liability, Duration of Agreement, Amendments or Termination**

Each party to this agreement shall not be liable for the acts and omissions of the other party's employees or members. This agreement does not confer any rights or benefits on any third party.

This agreement is effective upon signing date. This contract may be terminated upon a thirty (30) days advance written notice by either party. This agreement may be amended at anytime within the scope of this instrument, extended or renewed through a writing signed by both parties.

Any dispute arising under or relating to this Agreement are to be settled by binding arbitration in California or another location mutually agreeable to the parties. The arbitration shall be conducted on a confidential basis pursuant to the Commercial Arbitration Rules of the American Arbitration Association. Any decision or award as a result of any such arbitration proceeding shall be in writing and shall provide an explanation for all conclusions of law and fact and shall include the assessment of costs, expenses, and reasonable attorneys' fees. The arbitrator will have the authority to grant injunctive relief and specific performance to enforce the terms of this Agreement. An award of arbitration may be confirmed in a court of competent jurisdiction.

CalCPA agrees to indemnify and hold harmless and defend at its own expense CSMFO from and against any and all claims of infringement of copyright, patents, trademarks or other intellectual property rights affecting course materials and e-books as the case may be PROVIDED THAT (i) CSMFO shall not have done, permitted or suffered to be done anything which may have been or become an infringement of any rights in any copyright, patent, trademarks or other rights as hereinbefore provided, and (ii) CSMFO shall have demonstrated and exercised a reasonable standard of care in protecting the same; failing which CSMFO shall indemnify CalCPA against all actions, proceedings, costs, claims and expenses incurred in respect thereof.



**AGREEMENT**  
between the CalCPA Education Foundation  
and the California Society of Municipal Finance Officers

---

Date Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
<sign here>

**AnnMarie Gordon**  
Director, Partnerships  
CalCPA Education Foundation

\_\_\_\_\_  
<sign here>

**Melissa Dixon**  
Executive Director  
CSMFO

## CSMFO BOARD REPORT

---

Date: March 22, 2018  
FROM: Drew Corbett, Past President  
SUBJECT: 2018 Chapter Handbook

---

## RECOMMENDATION

Adopt the amended CSMFO Chapter Handbook for 2018.

## DISCUSSION

During his term as Past President in 2017, John Adams worked with the Chapter Chairs on a number of initiatives, including soliciting input on the Chapter Handbook. As a result of this effort, an update to the Chapter Handbook has been proposed for 2018. The key changes to the handbook, which are included in the attached version, are:

- Indicating raffle prizes at chapter meetings should be limited to \$50 but allowing Chapter Chairs some discretion for special circumstances.
- Providing complimentary registration at chapter meetings for presenters and for up to two (2) members from the staff of the meeting's host.
- Adding language to the section on reimbursements for chapter events to require that those requests be submitted within 60 days of the event.
- Adding language to the section on Chapter Chair coordination in an effort to avoid chapters "competing" with other chapters for speakers/presenters.



# *2018 CHAPTER HANDBOOK*

*Revised November 2017*

## **INTRODUCTION**

As a Chapter Chair or Vice Chair, you have been selected by your peers as a leader in the California Society of Municipal Finance Officers (CSMFO). This job is an important one, with certain responsibilities.

Chapters of CSMFO were established to provide an opportunity for members in various regions of the state to meet on a regular basis and exchange ideas, discuss professional problems and participate in technical presentations on specific areas of the profession. Each Chair is responsible to the Board of Directors for the leadership necessary to conduct an effective program in accord with the policies and procedures of CSMFO. This handbook has been prepared to assist in accomplishing that objective.

As you use the handbook in conducting your own work program, please make a note of any improvements that would make the handbook more useful. *The handbook should be considered a living document maintained and improved for transmittal to the next chapter leaders.* Please send any suggestions you may have for improvements to the handbook to the CSMFO office.

Chapters play an important role in the CSMFO organization. The regular meetings of each Chapter provide our membership with opportunities for personal and professional development that can only be accomplished at the local level. The Chapter leadership helps create an environment that allows the membership to grow and learn from others.

The state organization has an obligation to support each Chapter in this effort. The CSMFO Past President, with the assistance of the six North and South Board members, will be the liaison in working with local Chapter leaders in all aspects of membership development and in the improvement of grassroots organizational growth. Feel free to call on your designated Board Director or the Past President for assistance with Chapter issues.

The CSMFO Board of Directors meets regularly each year. As a Chair, you are encouraged to attend any or all Board meetings and to participate in the discussion of issues facing our organization. The in-person meetings are held in conjunction with the Annual Conference and at the Board retreat in September/October. In addition, the CSMFO Board typically meets monthly via teleconference. Contact CSMFO staff for more information on exact meeting times and locations. Key contacts are Executive Director Melissa Dixon, [melissa.dixon@staff.csmfo.org](mailto:melissa.dixon@staff.csmfo.org), and Meetings & Membership Assistant Amanda Smith, [amanda.smith@staff.csmfo.org](mailto:amanda.smith@staff.csmfo.org). The Past President will schedule conference calls with Chapter leaders and Board members to discuss issues and ideas to enhance CSMFO Chapter meetings. With your support of CSMFO at the state and local level, we can continue to strengthen our organization.

If you need support during the year, the Past President and the Board of Directors are available to provide assistance. Please feel free to use the resources we have available.

## **MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS - PLANNING PROCEDURE**

Programs should be planned well enough in advance to permit sufficient time to arrange for a meeting location, well qualified speakers and proper publicity. Topics and speakers should be chosen carefully. The five major elements, which contribute to successful and well-attended meetings, are as follows:

- Topics and speakers that are interesting
- A pleasant environment
- A current mailing list/advance notification
- Consistency in place and day of meeting
- Good food at a reasonable cost

### **Meeting Schedules**

The Bylaws provide that Chapter meeting schedules shall be determined by the Chapter membership. A regular schedule of meetings throughout the year should be adopted. Please be sure that your Chapter meetings do not conflict with other CSMFO activities. ***Always consult the CSMFO website ([www.csmfo.org](http://www.csmfo.org)) and other related publications for up-to-date listings.***

### **Selecting the Program and Speakers**

Topics and speakers should be chosen carefully. Select speakers who have imagination, originality, and the ability to get an idea across. To assure well-balanced programs over the course of the year, assign topics to speakers rather than allowing them to select their own. It will be the responsibility of your designated Board Director to attend at least one of your Chapter meetings and be available to discuss CSMFO, its programs, and the benefits of membership.

One of the first things you should do is put the other Chapter Chairs on your mailing and/or email list. If you use email, the Chapter Chair group email will reach all Chapter Chairs: [chapterchairs@csmfo.org](mailto:chapterchairs@csmfo.org). This will provide a forum for exchanging ideas for topics for future meetings. You should also make sure that you are on the mailing and/or email list for the other Chapters.

In panel presentations, if the main speaker is to present an unbiased, informative explanation of the topic, the panel members should be selected so as to balance each other's opinions--pro and con.

### **Topics for Consideration**

- Current and Pending Legislative Action
- Banking
- Generally Accepted Accounting Practices
- Compliance w/Federal and State Regulations
- Ethics
- Long-range Planning
- Disaster Recovery Planning
- CSMFO Programs/benefits of membership
- Budgeting
- Economic Forecasts
- Financing Capital Projects
- Inter-Agency Relations
- Hiring Employees
- Management Information Systems
- Technology and Public Finance
- Investments

### Suggested Sources of Speakers

- Finance Officers
- Attorneys
- Certified Public Accountants
- County Assessors, Tax Collectors, etc.
- College/University Professors
- Elected Officials/Legislators--State and Local
- CSMFO Board and Committee Members
- Economists
- Interesting CEOs
- City Managers
- Bankers
- Bond Counsel
- Financial Consultants
- Electronic and Print Media
- Chambers of Commerce
- City Professional Staff
- Strategic Planners
- Federal Reserve Officials

Please see the Chapter Chair Resource Room on the CSMFO website at [www.csmfo.org](http://www.csmfo.org) for potential topics and speakers.

**CAVEAT:** There must be **NO SALES PITCH**. As Chair, your responsibility is to make sure the presentation is informational and generic in nature. **NO COMMERCIALS!**

All meeting details should be confirmed with the speaker in writing in advance of the meeting. Provide the speaker with an idea of the type of meeting and the attendance to be expected. Ask for biographical material prior to the meeting. An outline of the speaker's presentation and/or a copy of handout material for your review prior to the meeting are also helpful.

Some Chapters have a tradition of presenting speakers with gifts to acknowledge their efforts. While this practice is not mandatory, CSMFO would like to encourage this practice.

### Sponsorship Guidelines

CSMFO acknowledges that commercial vendors are key partners in the success of our organization. The annual conference would not be possible without commercial sponsorships, and individual chapters may wish to seek commercial sponsorships to defray costs of special meetings from time to time. As such, CSMFO wishes to clarify the procedures for obtaining commercial sponsors for chapter meetings.

- 1) Chapters should attempt to limit commercial sponsorships received from one or more sponsors to 50% of the estimated costs for any individual meeting.
- 2) Chapters can only seek sponsorship from each commercial entity once per calendar year.
- 3) Providing gift cards or other items to be raffled to the attendees of a chapter meeting is not considered sponsorship for the purpose of these guidelines. Raffle prizes should be less than \$50, but will allow discretion by Chapter Chair as they can work with Commercial members and sponsors of events for special purposes with advance notice.
- 4) Chapter speakers should be selected based on the value they present to the governmental members. At no times should a sponsorship be used to "pay" for the right to present at a meeting. As such, to avoid the appearance of impropriety, commercial sponsorships shall not be obtained from any company providing a speaker at that same meeting.
- 5) A short introduction and description of services performed is not considered speaking for the purposes of these guidelines.

## **Financial Assistance from CSMFO**

Each year, CSMFO sets aside funds in the operational budget to assist with chapter expenses. A minimum of \$500 per chapter should be budgeted annually. Requests can be emailed and sent to the Executive Director. Requests in excess of \$500 for any one chapter in any given year will be forwarded to the Board for review and possible approval. Chapters should utilize their existing chapter funds for the majority of their expenses, and request assistance from CSMFO only in the case of a fund balance shortfall.

## **CPE Credit Requirements**

In order to qualify as continuing education, presentations must meet specific standards set by the California Board of Accountancy. Please refer to Article 12, Section 88 on the following webpage for detailed requirements: [http://www.dca.ca.gov/cba/laws\\_and\\_rules/regs.shtml](http://www.dca.ca.gov/cba/laws_and_rules/regs.shtml)

Essentially, a 50-minute presentation is equal to 1 CPE credit.

## **Meeting Registration**

Chapter meeting registration is run through the CSMFO office. Meetings will be posted as events in the CSMFO database and on the CSMFO website, allowing for online registration. When you schedule a chapter meeting, please notify Amanda Smith, [amanda.smith@staff.csmfo.org](mailto:amanda.smith@staff.csmfo.org). It is best to do this at least six (6) weeks in advance of your meeting, to allow ample online pre-registration time. Your event will be posted to the CSMFO website within 1-2 days. You will be sent the link to the online registration upon posting, for use in promoting the meeting. You will also be given a link to allow you to check registration counts directly.

Chapter chairs and vice chairs may receive complimentary registration to their respective chapter's meetings, in recognition of their time and effort. Presenters will receive complimentary registration for the meetings at which they speak. Chapters may provide complimentary registrations to host venues or those otherwise providing support for the meeting (up to two (2) per meeting).

Online registration will generally close one week prior to the meeting; you may request a different date if desired. Once online registration is closed, you may pull a registration list, complete with whether not payment has been received, through the admin link previously provided. A CPE certificate template for your meeting will be forwarded to you by SMA staff upon request.

After the meeting, send to the CSMFO office any checks received onsite at the meeting, along with contact information (such as a business card) for any who signed up onsite. Please make sure to note which checks are for which attendees. *NOTE: The CSMFO office cannot accept cash.*

## **Meeting Arrangements**

At least two months prior to the meeting, you should arrange the meeting place. You will need to know the following from each location:

- ✓ The room capacity
- ✓ Whether a separate room will be provided for the meal
- ✓ The price of the meal, tax and gratuity
- ✓ Room charge (if any)
- ✓ Your requirements for morning and/or afternoon refreshments
- ✓ No-host bar requirements
- ✓ Facilities for golf, tennis, racquetball or other sports if such activity is to be provided in the afternoon
- ✓ Seating arrangements (including speaker's table)
- ✓ Arrangements for slides, laptops, overhead projector, DVD/VCRs and any other audio/visual needs required by your speakers
- ✓ Registration table at door
- ✓ Percent of meals provided by restaurant in excess of the number guaranteed (usually 5%)

When selecting a non-traditional meeting site, please use proper discretion. *The CSMFO Board prohibits the use of CSMFO letterhead to advertise events at places that may give the perception of unethical conduct (e.g., racetracks, gambling establishments, etc.).*

The Board recognizes there are a few Chapters that have traditionally met once a year at such places. The Board does not want to impose a heavy hand and disallow such meetings nor do they want to dictate exactly what is or is not appropriate. However, the Board feels strongly enough about the issue that CSMFO will not officially endorse such meetings by use of its letterhead. The Board, therefore, encourages each Chapter Chair to use his or her own best judgment in making decisions regarding meeting places. If you feel you need further clarification or direction, please call your designated Board Director.

After the meeting place has been selected, get a written confirmation from the facility of the date and time of the meeting, menus, cost, room capacity and, in general, all the items you have discussed with them by phone. They will usually require a deposit. The meal price will be an important factor. It should be neither too high nor too low.

Consideration should be given to rotating scheduled Chapter meetings to various host agencies within the chapter. The host agency would schedule the program and speaker as well as coordinate the meeting location. This practice would reduce the workload of the Chapter leadership.

## **Registration Fees**

In order to determine the registration fee, you should add up the total costs listed below and divide by your anticipated attendance.

Include the following:

Lunch	_____
Tax	_____
Tip	_____
Morning and/or afternoon refreshments	_____
Room charge	_____
Minimum bar guarantee (if applicable)	_____
Postage and copy cost	_____
Speaker gift	_____
Total	_____
Anticipated paying attendance (Speakers are not charged)	_____
Fee per participant	_____

Your goal is to break even; however, you will be over in some cases and short in others depending on the final attendance and the guarantee that you must provide. You also may want to consider whether to charge non-member attendees a slightly higher fee for attending your meetings. When making your guarantee, bear in mind that attendance is normally 85-90% of the total reserved. (Some who reserve may not attend, and some who do not reserve may attend.) If you are collecting sufficient funds at your meetings, you may be building an excess of funds. You are not encouraged to build a significant balance of funds for your Chapter, however you can use those to pay for a speaker for a future meeting.

## **Refunds**

After the meetings, some individuals request refunds because they were unable to attend. If you have a good registration sheet, you can probably verify this. Also, you may receive refund requests prior to the meeting from people who will be unable to attend. It is a good practice to state in the meeting notice that refunds will be given only to those individuals who advise you two to three days in advance that they will be unable to attend. You have guaranteed attendance at the meeting and you are depending on the members who made reservations when you submit your final attendance figures. You may have to pay the facility for your guarantee. Accordingly, you may have to refuse refunds to those people who have not given you adequate notice. However, if there are sufficient funds available, you may refund.

## **Event Book**

At the back of this handbook are event sheets. As Chair, you should fill out a sheet for each meeting you hold. Record the date, location, topic, speaker, attendance, cost and fees collected. A notice of the meeting should be attached. *At the end of your term, pass this book on to your successor.* Maintenance of the event sheets for those who come after you is one of the most important things you can do for CSMFO.

---

## THE MEETING

---

### **Before the Meeting**

Arrive at the facility early to make sure all is in order. You will need to set up a registration table. You will need to take the following supplies with you:

- The nametags for those who pre-registered (if you're doing nametags).
- Blank nametags and felt pens for use on the nametags (if you're doing nametags, for those not pre-registered)
- Change fund
- A list of the pre-registered individuals and whether they have prepaid or not
- CSMFO membership brochures and volunteer flyers
- Receipts for those that may request one
- If your session qualifies, CPE certificates for attendees

### **At the Meeting**

You will Chair the meeting. You may find yourself a "rover" or "gofer" while at the meeting, taking care of last-minute details. If possible, delegate this to someone else.

### **The Agenda**

A neatly typed, well-spaced agenda will serve as an aid in keeping the meeting events orderly, and it will be useful from the standpoint of timing. Besides serving as a guide to the order of business or events, an agenda may include the Chair's notes, in appropriate order, with reference to comments about the speaker and introductions. This meeting should be used to report important activities and events of CSMFO.

### **Introductions**

An introduction should be short. It should be interesting, appropriate and adequate, but still short. A good speech introduction might include: Why this speaker--at this time--to this audience?

### **Adjournment**

Close the meeting with an announcement of the next meeting; an expression of appreciation to all those who have been present; a hope that they have enjoyed themselves; a summary in which thanks are offered the speakers and participants, and, if elections are to be held at the next meeting, announce them.

### **After the Meeting**

The facility operator will ask you to sign the bill at the time of the meeting (even though you may be able to pay it at a later date by check). Verify the number of people attending, the unit price, the extensions and the additions on this ticket before you sign it. You may wish to count the number of people at the luncheon after they are seated.

You may set up payment for the venue through the CSMFO office, or you may handle it personally. If you handle it personally, please submit your reimbursement request to the CSMFO office after the meeting, complete with receipt and information to whom to make the check payable, within sixty (60) days of the event.



---

## CHAPTER ACCOUNTING

---

The CSMFO office is responsible for handling all Chapter accounting. Registration income comes in to the CSMFO office, and is coded to reflect that it is for your Chapter. Likewise all Chapter expenses should be run through the CSMFO office. To request a check or credit card payment from CSMFO, please email Melissa Dixon ([melissa.dixon@staff.csmfo.org](mailto:melissa.dixon@staff.csmfo.org)). Please allow a 3-week turnaround on all check requests.

Chapter financial reports will be included in each packet disseminated for CSMFO Board of Directors meetings. This will be a profit & loss report specific to each Chapter. The Statement of Net Assets will show your Chapter's fund balance; this is updated annually, at the first of the year. To determine your Chapter's fund balance at any given time, simply add the net income from your Chapter's profit & loss report to the fund balance as listed on the Statement of Net Assets.

---

## YOUR SUCCESSOR

---

Each Chapter should have a Chair and a Vice Chair. Terms are one year, and concurrent with the CSMFO Board terms (term begins and ends with the Annual Conference). There are no term limits for Chapter Chairs, but it is expected when the Chair steps down the Vice Chair will take his or her place. The Chair/Vice Chair structure was implemented by the Board of Directors as a means of easing a successor into the role of Chair.

Chapters are encouraged to hold elections annually for the position of Chair. It is recommended that elections take place at the last meeting of the calendar year. Elections may be held in whichever manner each Chapter deems most feasible (i.e., electronic, written ballot, show of hands, etc.). If a Chapter does not conduct an election, the Chapter Liaison/Past President may appoint a Chair. Vice Chair are appointed by the Chair.

Certain Chapters have experienced difficulty in developing a potential replacement. Experience has shown that many are willing to serve, yet are reluctant to volunteer. One of the primary responsibilities of a Chapter Chair is to nurture a successor. In order to maintain a vibrant organization, it is important to identify up-and-coming talent. Don't underestimate the power of the ask.

When you do step down as Chair and a new Chair/Vice Chair are appointed, please notify the CSMFO Secretary so that updates can be made to all applicable CSMFO documents. Please do not step down without first identifying your successor.

---

## GROUP E-MAILS FOR CHAPTERS

---

There is a group email just for Chapter leaders and a group email for each of the individual Chapters. Chapter leaders are encouraged to use these groups to keep each other and their Chapters up-to-date on the latest happenings.

**The address for the Chapter Group is *chapterchairs@csmfo.org*.**

Chapter leaders will be notified of Board meeting and Chapter conference calls using this list. Chapter leaders are encouraged to use the group list to comment on topics and speakers they have used or to request advice and suggestions on Chapter meetings.

The individual Chapter lists may be used to post meeting notices and changes, send inquiries to local members and post updates on local issues. These listservs are for you and your Chapter to use as a valuable communication tool to keep each other informed on regional financial news, reviews and events. Use this listserv in any way you find helpful. You will want members to observe standard e-mail use guidelines as a courtesy to others and to encourage members to join and participate. To make the list most effective, you will want to publicize the group list at your Chapter meetings and in your mailing notices. The more members on the list, the greater the opportunity to share local news.

Now the important part - how to join! Just like the CSMFO general members group list, you may subscribe directly from the CSMFO website. From the home page, click on “Chapters”, then click on the Chapter you want to subscribe to, then follow the instructions. It’s easy, and will take members less than one minute. All new members are signed up for the listserv of their Chapter upon joining.

To send a message to your Chapter, address it to the “name of chapter@csmfo.org” (for example: central-coast@csmfo.org). The Chapter names are listed below:

central-coast	desert-mountain	north-coast	sacramento-valley
central-la	east-bay-sf	northeast-counties	san-diego-county
central-valley	imperial-county	northwest-counties	san-gabriel-valley
channel-counties	inland-empire	orange-county	south-bay
coachella-valley	monterey-bay	peninsula	south-san-joaquin

If you have any questions about the use of the listservs please contact the CSMFO office at (877) 282-9183.

---

## CHAPTER NEWSLETTERS AND THE *MAGAZINE*

---

The *CSMFO Magazine* is intended to be a grassroots publication for information, input, articles, news clips, job changes, Chapter highlights, etc. coming from members across the state. The Magazine is only as successful as individual members make it. Therefore, we hope you will be proactive in soliciting articles from your Chapter.

The most fundamental aspect of membership in CSMFO is belonging to a Chapter. This is where finance officers and others meet and greet to discuss topics of interest to the finance world. Because you, as a Chapter Chair or Vice Chair, are vital to that aspect, we would like to expand our Chapter awareness using the *Magazine* as its vehicle. Topics: If it interests you, it's going to interest other members. Maybe you could write about a proposition that's getting a lot of attention in your Chapter, or a project you've taken on that's interesting.

When submitting articles, please observe the following: (1) the deadline for submission is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to the month of publication (i.e., February 15 for the March issue); (2) all members may submit articles; (3) the *CSMFO Magazine* reserves the right to invoke editorial privileges. Please submit articles via e-mail to Melissa Dixon at [melissa.dixon@staff.csmfo.org](mailto:melissa.dixon@staff.csmfo.org).

---

## CHAPTER LISTINGS ON WEBSITE

---

Each Chapter has a page on the CSMFO web site. The section contains a brief summary of the Chapter and its regular activity, a list of Chapter contacts, and a list of meeting dates and locations. This page is a useful tool to inform Chapter members. There is a Chapter Resource area where the handbook is located. There are also meeting ideas and past presentation information posted by all Chapters. Please review the contents and contact Melissa Dixon at [melissa.dixon@staff.csmfo.org](mailto:melissa.dixon@staff.csmfo.org) with revisions and updates.

---

## SPECIAL MEMBER AWARDS OR RECOGNITION

---

On occasion, you may want to verbally recognize certain Chapter members during your Chapter meetings for accomplishments they have made in their own agencies, awards they have received through CSMFO or other associations, or milestones they have reached in their career, such as job promotions or retirement. This recognition is initiated at the Chapter level so try to develop rapport with your members such as you can be informed of these things as they happen.

Special certificates of appreciation are also available to recognize those who have demonstrated long-term commitment to municipal finance and membership in CSMFO (20 years is the suggested benchmark). Such awards are generally given at retirement. The certificates can be obtained by contacting the CSMFO office (877) 282-9183 at least three weeks in advance of the meeting. *Any Chapter Chair wishing to award a certificate of appreciation must first receive approval by the President.*

---

## CHAPTER DUES

---

No dues may be charged by Chapters. CSMFO membership dues are set by the Board.

---

## CHAPTER CHAIR COORDINATION

---

In addition to attending the Chapter breakfast at the Annual Conference, Chapter Chairs and Vice Chairs are expected to participate in scheduled conference calls to discuss items of mutual interest. These calls are an opportunity to share meeting strategies, discuss organizational issues and communicate with your fellow Chapter leaders. It is encouraged that Chapter Chairs share information with each other, particularly regarding meeting dates and topics, so as not to unduly compete with other chapters. A google spreadsheet has been created to facilitate this information sharing:

[https://docs.google.com/a/smithmooreassoc.com/spreadsheets/d/1aE1tpBuGyva1xOM9rJ9SFfnFiOgdQQ2tYK2Ltk\\_T1bQ/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/a/smithmooreassoc.com/spreadsheets/d/1aE1tpBuGyva1xOM9rJ9SFfnFiOgdQQ2tYK2Ltk_T1bQ/edit?usp=sharing).

Chapter Chairs are also an important resource in the distribution of information to CSMFO members. The CSMFO Secretary and Past President may request your participation from time to time.

---

## SUMMARY ARTICLE FOR THE ANNUAL REPORT

---

At the conclusion of your year-long term, you will be asked to prepare a brief summary of the events in your Chapter. This summary will be published in the annual report, which is distributed in the first part of the following year.

A brief synopsis, maybe one or two paragraphs, is all that is required. Highlights can include speakers, topics, and/or interesting places your meetings were held at.

---

## MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

---

Chapters have a responsibility to CSMFO for membership development. Membership applications and materials are available on the CSMFO website, and brochures and volunteer flyers are available by request from the CSMFO office.

Benefits of CSMFO membership include the following:

- With nearly two thousand members, CSMFO is California's premier statewide association for governmental finance officials. Enormous networking opportunities and benefits are offered.
- CSMFO provides a variety of programs including training programs, webinars, a membership directory, a website offering a multitude of helpful resources, and a monthly newsletter.
- CSMFO Chapter meetings provide members the opportunity to meet on a regular basis in a variety of city locations, to exchange ideas and discuss common problems, and to develop both personally and professionally at a local level.
- CSMFO meetings and training programs provide unbiased, informative speakers and presentations on specific technical areas of the profession as well as on useful topics of general interest.

- CSMFO members share an active statewide email list that provides an easy way to stay in touch with new members, a forum for asking questions, requesting advice and sharing news, a cost-free way to distribute training and development information and a means to correspond with other finance officials on common issues and on the latest legislative developments.
- The CSMFO *Magazine* is a grassroots newsletter with articles, news clips, job changes, job opportunities, chapter highlights and other information from members across the state.
- CSMFO provides the vehicle to recognize certain members for accomplishments they have made in their own cities, awards they have received through CSMFO or other associations, or milestones they have reached in their careers.
- CSMFO membership dues are relatively low and an exceptional value and investment in the future of members and their agencies.

## CSMFO CHAPTER MEETING SUMMARY

MEETING

---

DATE

---

LOCATION

---

TOPIC

---

SPEAKER

---

ATTENDANCE

---

COST

---

FEES COLLECTED

---

**Note: Please attach a copy of your meeting notice to the back of this sheet, and pass on all sheets to your successor.**

## **CSMFO BOARD REPORT**

---

DATE: March 22, 2018

FROM: Drew Corbett, Past President

SUBJECT: President's Discretionary Fund

### **DISCUSSION**

When unexpected and unbudgeted requests and initiatives arise during the year, Board action is required to approve an increase to the budget. Occasionally, smaller requests and initiatives come up and may be more time-sensitive in nature, and having the organization's President with some funding available for use at her discretion may be an effective use of our resources.

The intention of this discretionary budget would be for small requests that come in during the year that further the organization's mission but do not necessarily rise to the level of warranting formal approval from the Board. These requests would not necessarily be generated solely by the President, as anyone in the leadership could make a request of the President to utilize this funding.

If approved, funding in the amount of \$2,500 would be added to the 2018 budget as a sub-item in the President's Expense category. The President would not be required to request any further Board approval to utilize these funds, but she will be required to report to the Board on how the discretionary funds were used over the course of the year. This would come in the form of a final Board report at the end of her term.

For future years, the President-Elect would make this request for funding as part of his/her budget development.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Board of Directors approve an increase to the 2018 operating budget in the amount of \$2,500 to be utilized at the sole discretion of the President.



## **CSMFO BOARD REPORT**

---

DATE: March 22, 2018

FROM: Grace Castaneda, Membership Committee Chair  
Steve Heidi, Board Member  
Drew Corbett, Past President

SUBJECT: CSMFO Membership Scholarship Fund

### **DISCUSSION**

Each year, the Membership Committee works with Smith Moore & Associates (SMA) to begin the cycle of membership renewals. When a current member still has not renewed his/her membership by March, SMA sends a reminder email and requests the member to reply with a reason of why he/she is not renewing, if the member is not intending to renew. In most cases, reasons stated relate to retirement or working in other areas outside Finance. In a few instances, the reasons stated relate to agency restrictions. The most recent example was a member who did not renew because the agency she recently joined only pays for memberships for manager-level employees.

The request is to establish a Membership Scholarship Fund, up to a total number of 15 scholarships this year. Scholarships can be awarded to continue memberships, or can be awarded as an outreach effort to non-members. The Chapter Engagement Ad Hoc Working Group, along with the Past President in his role as liaison to the chapters, are refining ideas on how to reach out and gain new members at the chapter level, and this scholarship fund will provide an additional tool to reach out. 2018 will be used as a pilot year to test the effectiveness of the program. Scholarships can be awarded on a case by case basis, under the discretion of the Past President, Board Member who directs the Chapter Engagement Ad Hoc Working Group, and Membership Committee Chair. The Membership Committee will track the progress of scholarship recipients and ask the recipients to complete a periodic survey, so as to determine whether recipients utilize their scholarships and derive value from their memberships. If this pilot proves successful, the Membership Committee will come back to the Board later in the year to continue this scholarship fund annually.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Board of Directors approve a Membership Scholarship Fund, with a budget appropriation to the total 2018 CSMFO operating budget in the amount of \$1,650 from reserves (15 scholarships at \$110 per scholarship).



## CSMFO BOARD REPORT

---

DATE: March 22, 2018

FROM: Richard Lee, Board Member

SUBJECT: CSMFO App SurveyMonkey results

### **Background:**

CSMFO's 2018 Strategic Plan includes discussion of a potential CSMFO App. The attached SurveyMonkey results were collected over a two week period, provide preliminary feedback from 138 CSMFO members, and are summarized below.

Over 82 percent of members stated that they would use a CSMFO App. Most of the content options suggested garnered at least a 50% affirmative response, with the exception of the Resource Room, and contacting CSMFO leadership. 63% of members would not be interested in using the app to connect with a coach. 39 members indicated that they would be willing to serve as beta testers for the CSMFO App. Over two-thirds of members would use the app via Apple's iOS platform, while the majority of the remainder would use the app via the Android platform.

Within the survey questions that permitted freeform responses, some intriguing input for potential app content/features included:

- Renew or apply for membership
- Quick survey function
- Keyword search of list serv
- Provide fingerprint reader access

A number of the freeform responses also stated that some members would prefer to use the CSMFO website rather than the app; certainly a discussion topic for the newly formed CSMFO App working group, comprised of a small cross section of CSMFO leadership, including Grace Castenada, Will Fuentes, and Nitish Sharma.

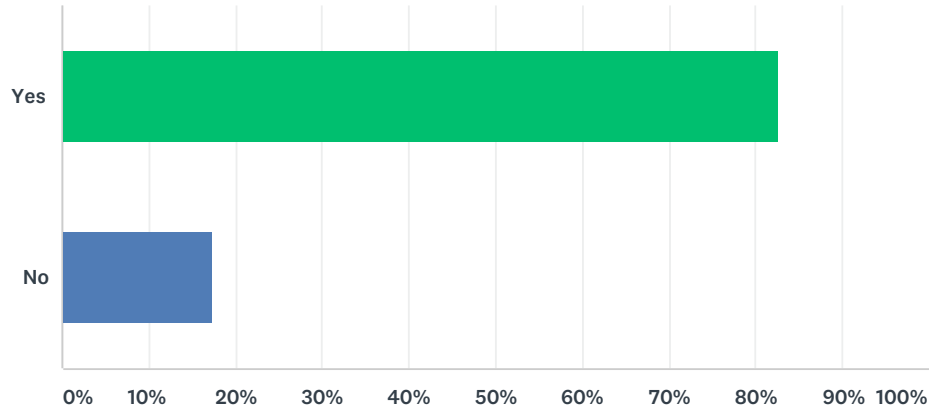
**Recommendation:**

Based on CSMFO member survey responses, it is recommended that the Board provide direction to the CSMFO App working group to move forward with its efforts, targeting completion of the conceptual app content, appearance, and functions by the end of 2018. The working group will provide regular status updates to the Board throughout the year, and seek guidance as needed.

Attachment CSMFO App SurveyMonkey results

## Q1 Would you use a CSMFO App?

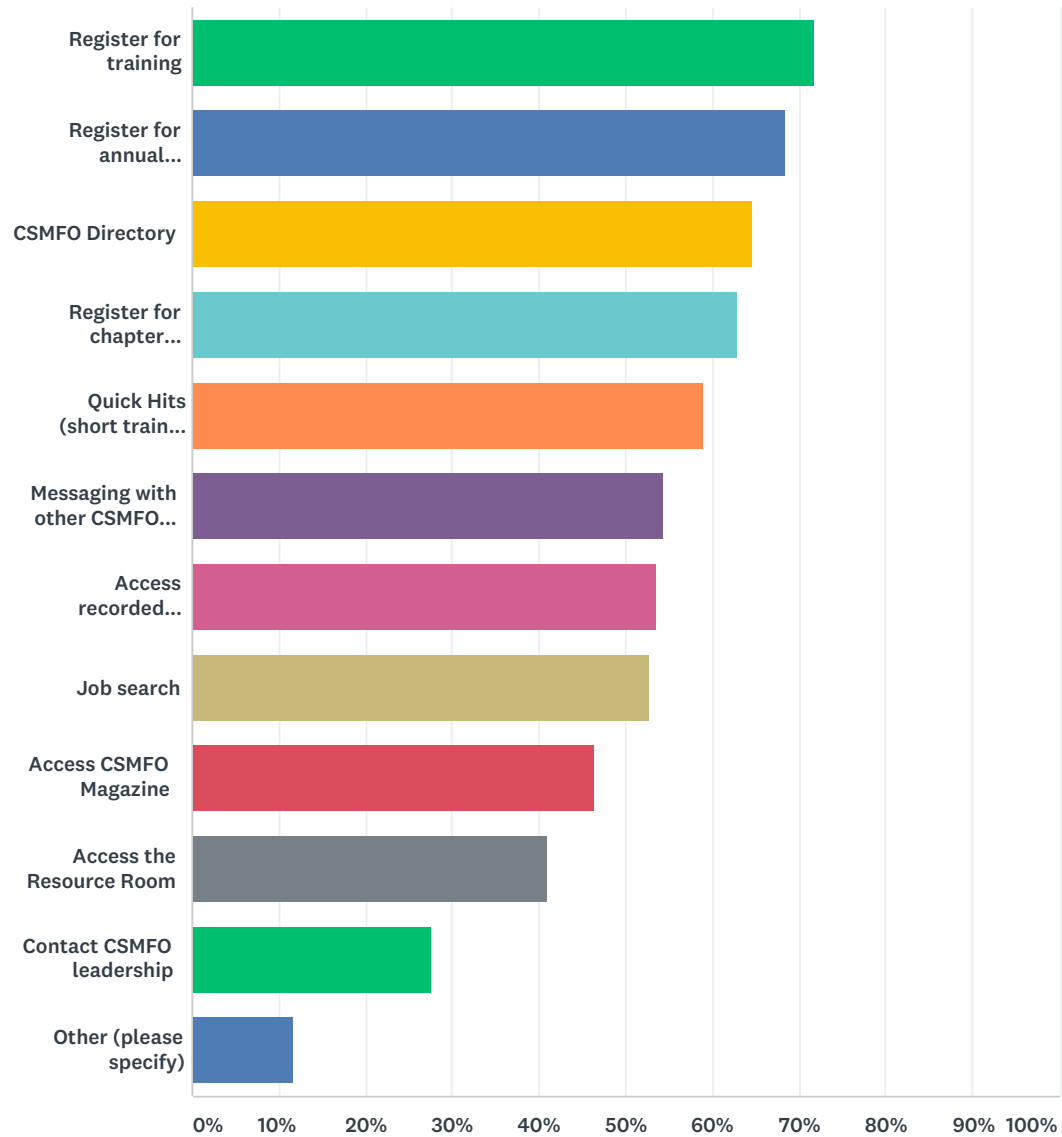
Answered: 138 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	82.61%	114
No	17.39%	24
TOTAL		138

## Q2 What content would be useful to you?

Answered: 127   Skipped: 11



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Register for training	71.65%	91
Register for annual conference	68.50%	87
CSMFO Directory	64.57%	82
Register for chapter meetings	62.99%	80
Quick Hits (short training videos)	59.06%	75
Messaging with other CSMFO members	54.33%	69
Access recorded webinars	53.54%	68
Job search	52.76%	67

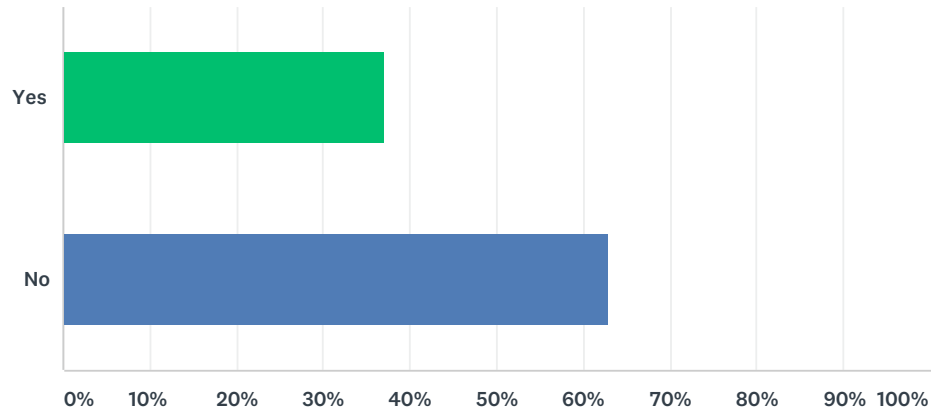
## CSMFO App

Access CSMFO Magazine	46.46%	59
Access the Resource Room	40.94%	52
Contact CSMFO leadership	27.56%	35
Other (please specify)	11.81%	15
Total Respondents: 127		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Renew or apply for membership	2/28/2018 10:39 PM
2	News Alert, Advocacy, Social Media, and Sharing Relevant Articles	2/28/2018 9:36 PM
3	Maybe some sort of document sharing	2/27/2018 2:52 PM
4	Replace Guidebook for annual conference schedule?	2/27/2018 2:08 PM
5	Quick survey fuction, keyword search of old survey results, or if possible a place for members to post News (e.g. CalPERS will shorten amortization period to 20 years) that they thought is important for everyone to know.	2/27/2018 1:21 PM
6	listserve search	2/27/2018 1:20 PM
7	none of the above	2/27/2018 1:19 PM
8	None, since i wouldn't use an app	2/27/2018 12:47 PM
9	None - I would likely go straight to the website for the above content.	2/27/2018 12:27 PM
10	Access conference schedule	2/27/2018 12:15 PM
11	Replace Conference Guide with App	2/27/2018 12:09 PM
12	Attending CPE	2/27/2018 12:07 PM
13	None of the above	2/27/2018 12:02 PM
14	access annual conference info	2/27/2018 11:55 AM
15	I have no need to access this info from my phone	2/27/2018 11:53 AM

Q3 Would you be interested in using the app to connect with a coach (via video conferencing feature)?

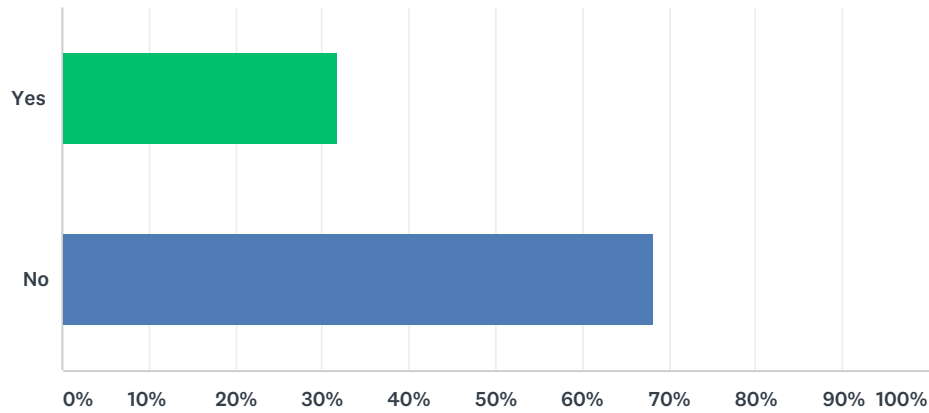
Answered: 127    Skipped: 11



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	37.01%	47
No	62.99%	80
TOTAL		127

## Q4 Would you be interested in serving as a tester for the beta app?

Answered: 123 Skipped: 15



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	31.71%	39
No	68.29%	84
TOTAL		123

## Q5 If you would be willing to be a beta tester, please provide your contact information.

Answered: 37    Skipped: 101

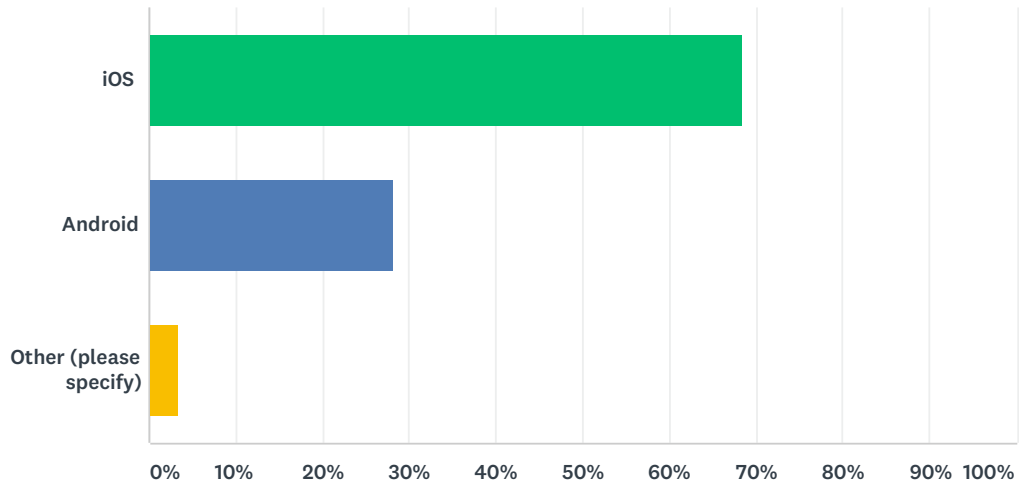
#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	jslobojan@surfcity-hb.org	3/6/2018 10:33 AM
2	vportillo@ci.lathrop.ca.us	3/2/2018 5:06 PM
3	gcastaneda@cityofsanmateo.org	2/28/2018 10:40 PM
4	jadams@toaks.org	2/28/2018 9:36 PM
5	Karan Reid, City of Concord, 925-671-3192, karan.reid@cityofconcord.org	2/28/2018 11:39 AM
6	Craig Boyer craig.boyer@acgov.org	2/28/2018 9:16 AM
7	Will Fuentes - Milpitas	2/27/2018 7:02 PM
8	Dennis Kauffman dkauffman@roseville.ca.us 916-774-5313	2/27/2018 6:40 PM
9	Joan Michaels Aguilar jmichaelsaguilar@ci.dixon.ca.us	2/27/2018 6:06 PM
10	Matt Pressey; mattp@ci.salinas.ca.us	2/27/2018 5:56 PM
11	william.clayton@bcvwd.org	2/27/2018 5:10 PM
12	Stephen Parker - sparker@ci.stanton.ca.us (714) 890-4226	2/27/2018 5:01 PM
13	ereyna@wrcog.us	2/27/2018 4:55 PM
14	Jennifer Wakeman, City of Lafayette, jwakeman@ci.lafayette.ca.us, 925-299-3213	2/27/2018 4:27 PM
15	Karla Campos, City of La Quinta 760-777-7073 kcampos@la-quinta.org	2/27/2018 2:58 PM
16	mshaker@applevalley.org	2/27/2018 2:52 PM
17	coffemug888@gmail.com	2/27/2018 2:17 PM
18	carriec@cvwdwater.com	2/27/2018 1:53 PM
19	karenxquang@yahoo.com	2/27/2018 1:22 PM
20	jstarosciak@srfecc.ca.gov	2/27/2018 1:21 PM
21	derek rampone, drampone@redwoodcity.org	2/27/2018 1:09 PM
22	skoll@sanleandro.org	2/27/2018 1:00 PM
23	Vera Whittenburg cell: 209-954-6100	2/27/2018 12:59 PM
24	Janna Bogue 805-449-2249	2/27/2018 12:59 PM
25	csafe@woodsidesetown.org	2/27/2018 12:51 PM
26	Jason B. Williams, CPA; Cell: (951) 214-5747; Work Phone: (760) 373-7483; Work email: accountant@californiacity-ca.gov	2/27/2018 12:48 PM
27	dglasser@albanyca.org	2/27/2018 12:18 PM
28	noah.daniels@cityofrc.us	2/27/2018 12:16 PM
29	andrew.thompson@cityofsanrafael.org	2/27/2018 12:16 PM
30	B_wilkie@ci.lompoc.ca.us	2/27/2018 12:11 PM
31	Steve Heide	2/27/2018 12:10 PM
32	Michael Solorza, msolorza@pico-rivera.org	2/27/2018 12:08 PM
33	Roxanne Muhlmeister, roxanne.muhlmeister@carlsbadca.gov or 760-602-2417	2/27/2018 12:05 PM

## CSMFO App

34	Claudia Martinez, City of La Quinta <a href="mailto:cmartinez@laquintaca.gov">cmartinez@laquintaca.gov</a>	2/27/2018 11:57 AM
35	6192004747	2/27/2018 11:53 AM
36	<a href="mailto:jessica.luna@westcovina.org">jessica.luna@westcovina.org</a>	2/27/2018 11:51 AM
37	<a href="mailto:kscott@victorvilleca.gov">kscott@victorvilleca.gov</a>	2/27/2018 11:50 AM

## Q6 Which smartphone platform would you use?

Answered: 120 Skipped: 18



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
iOS	68.33%	82
Android	28.33%	34
Other (please specify)	3.33%	4
TOTAL		120

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Prefer Windows but can use iOS if necessary	2/27/2018 12:16 PM
2	Both ios and android	2/27/2018 12:12 PM
3	I'd be more inclined to use the app on an iPad	2/27/2018 11:54 AM
4	none	2/27/2018 11:53 AM

## Q7 Please share any comments that will help guide CSMFO leadership in the development process.

Answered: 15   Skipped: 123

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	If we can get the app to recognize fingerprint reader, that would be great. Or at least not require a login with every use of the app.	3/6/2018 10:34 AM
2	I said no on Coaching (don't need it, but a cool idea!)	2/28/2018 9:37 PM
3	It's a great idea. Let's do it yesterday! Could also be great for the annual conference.	2/27/2018 7:03 PM
4	Great idea	2/27/2018 6:06 PM
5	Apps are useful, but from a technology standpoint, a responsive website will be easier and less costly to manage.	2/27/2018 4:10 PM
6	This is a great idea!	2/27/2018 2:52 PM
7	An application, which takes memory space on your smartphone (thus making it a limited resource), is great for interactive tasks used on a recurring basis. Based on this questionnaire, it appears the app would be primarily focused on information delivery/access. This can be achieved by going directly to the mobile/full CSMFO website, so in my opinion, this app would not add too much value, assuming its primarily for information delivery. Building on the above, the conference app is a great tool. The difference? There is a specific time period (conference duration) when the users of the app (conference attendees) need to access specific information on a recurring basis. I don't think a general CSMFO app would achieve the same results due to the different nature between the two.	2/27/2018 12:50 PM
8	I think the more we utilize the most up to date technology, the more relevant we will be as an organization. I applaud your efforts to continue to keep CSMFO up to date with the times.	2/27/2018 12:49 PM
9	User-friendly interface	2/27/2018 12:22 PM
10	I thought you were talking about the conference app. I use it for planning.	2/27/2018 12:13 PM
11	Chapter meeting location directions would be great.	2/27/2018 12:12 PM
12	Richard Lee is the best!!	2/27/2018 12:11 PM
13	It would be great to be able to attend webinars using the smartphone	2/27/2018 12:08 PM
14	I'd be happy to beta test, but I'm just not sure I would be using it enough to give you adequate feedback.	2/27/2018 11:54 AM
15	a mobile browser friendly website would be more useful than an app.	2/27/2018 11:52 AM