



Franklin Regional  
Council of Governments

Director of Finance

*Profile*



EDWARD J. COLLINS CENTER FOR PUBLIC MANAGEMENT  
McCORMACK GRADUATE SCHOOL OF POLICY STUDIES  
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON

# **FRANKLIN REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**

## **FINANCE DIRECTOR**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) has retained the services of the Edward J. Collins Jr. Center for Public Management at UMASS Boston to assist in the Council's recruitment of a Finance Director. This Profile draws upon our discussions with the Executive Director, staff and Council members. For more information about the FRCOG please consult its web site ([www.frcog.org](http://www.frcog.org)). FRCOG is located in Greenfield, MA.

### **Background**

FRCOG was established in 1997 by Chapter 151 of the Acts of 1996. It is designed as a bona fide Council of Governments and successor to the county government that carried out some, but not all of its current functions. FRCOG is governed by a 29 member board with a representative from each of the 26 member towns, two members elected from the Franklin County area and one member appointed from the Franklin Regional Planning Board. The most significant change from county government to a council of governments is that municipal membership in FRCOG is voluntary.

The largest municipality in the County is Greenfield with a population of approximately 18,000. Eighteen of the remaining 25 towns have populations less than 2,000, the smallest being Monroe with a population of 120. While Greenfield is relatively small, it serves as a service center for the region and for many years Greenfield and adjacent towns served as an important center of machine tool manufacturing and related industrial activity. The total population of the region is approximately 72,000. Except for Greenfield which has a Mayor – Council form of government, all of the municipalities have Town Meeting – Board of Selectmen organizational structures, a form that dates to the colonial era.

### **The Setting**

The region is bisected by a stunning stretch of the Connecticut River and is regarded as one of the most picturesque areas in New England. Significant cultural attractions are nearby and easily accessible. Northampton, Massachusetts is 30 minutes south; Brattleboro, Vermont and Keene, NH are 30 minutes north; Springfield, MA (soon home to a casino and entertainment venue) is less than an hour away; Boston, MA is 2 hours away and New York City is 3 hours away. Franklin County itself is renowned for its outdoor recreational opportunities including whitewater rafting and kayaking, skiing, hiking, mountain biking and fishing. The region has an annual music festival, the nation's oldest cider festival, many traditional town and agricultural fairs, and excellent small music and dining venues.

## **Governance, Management, Staffing**

The Council of Governments functions through several committees including an Executive Committee that monitors operations on a regular basis and a Finance Committee that works closely with the Finance Director and Executive Director. The Executive Director has overall responsibility for the organization including all aspects of personnel and operations. The current Executive Director has a 24-year tenure with the organization and the retiring Finance Director has served in that position for 18 years. The staff is stable with 58% having over 8 years with FRCOG and 28% having over 15 years of service. Significant additional information may be found in the 2016 annual report and the recent Fiscal and Program Review. These documents are on the Center's and FRCOG's website, as is the enabling legislation.

The staff is considered highly professional and FRCOG is considered an excellent employer, offering good benefits and flexibility. Total staff is 48 which is equivalent to 42 ftes. The organization has new offices in the brand new regional transportation center building, which is the first net zero energy transit center in the nation and location of an Amtrak station. The offices are bright and modern. The organization working style is collaborative and collegial.

## **Major Program Areas**

The mission of the FRCOG is to serve the towns and region that is Franklin County. Franklin County is the most rural region in Massachusetts and many of its 26 towns are very small with limited staff capacity. Over the FRCOG's 20-year history, it has expanded and diversified its programming, offering both breadth and depth of service to its member communities. The FRCOG has gained a statewide and national reputation for its innovative and expansive offerings. FRCOG works in seven main areas:

**Economic Development** including addressing brownfields, proactive administration of economic development programs, mill reuse and participation in a tri-state (VT, MA, NH) initiative.

**Healthy Communities** including opioid and substance abuse prevention, diabetes prevention, Community Health Improvement Planning and Teen Health Survey work.

**Municipal Services** including public safety initiatives, municipal financial management technical assistance, town accounting, which provides accounting services to 12 towns, building, wiring, and plumbing inspection program collective purchasing program and public health.

**Regional Preparedness** including development and planning for emergency communication, enhancing operational communication and coordination, and public health emergency response capability.

**Regional Advocacy** including representation on numerous governmental bodies, special purpose bodies and coordinating committees.

**Resource Management and Sustainability** including food assessments, several forestry based projects, Deerfield River watershed planning, and a regional climate change project

**Transportation** including bicycle and alternative transportation advocacy, bicycle tourism, an east county transit study, an inventory of access to outdoor recreational facilities and Pavement management, and transit planning.

## **Finance**

Annually, the Director of Finance oversees approximately \$7.5 million. The organization is largely dependent on federal grants and to a lesser extent on state and foundation grants; 58% of the organization's revenue originates with the federal government. Only 6% of revenue is from the basic municipal assessment. The Fiscal and Program Review on the Center's and FRCOG's websites contain an extensive discussion of revenues and expenditures and the organization's FY17 Year-End Report.

Typically the organization receives, manages and reports on over 50 grants per year, manages the municipal service programs it provides, oversees a revolving loan fund program, and acts as fiduciary for multi-region projects that includes financial relationships with many sub-grantees. While it is not a particularly large organization, it is fiscally complex.

The finance function is led by the Finance Director who is supported by two part-time staff: one a .8 fte and one a .6 fte. The Finance Director's role extends to active and direct consultation with program staff on grant management and reporting and regular consultation with the Executive Director. The incumbent is intimate with the details of the FRCOG's finances. The organization is audited annually and audits have been clean. A copy of the most recently completed audit is on the Center's website. An extremely high level of professional trust exists among the Executive Director, key staff, and the Finance Committee, Executive Committee and the full FRCOG Council. Commencing in July 2017 the organization has adopted a new financial software system, Abila MIP.

## **Challenges and Role of the New Finance Director**

The new finance director must possess the technical skills and interest to sustain the financial systems, procedures and organizational reputation that has been established through continuous diligent effort over the last two decades. This will require the new person gaining familiarity with the financial operations of the organization on a detailed level as well as mastering the current financial software and reporting systems.

Specifically the new finance director should have:

- Financial management experience in an organization with multiple funding streams that have defined reporting requirements. This could include government entities, educational institutions, non-profits and similar organizations.
- Familiarity with government grant and contract reporting and audit procedures.
- Familiarity with modern financial software systems.
- A demonstrated interest in serving as an integral part of an organization's core management team and in the mission of the organization.
- Comfort in dealing with staff at all levels and in serving as a consultant, coach and facilitator of projects and new initiatives.
- Comfort working in an environment where the finance director works both as a front-line staffer (hands-on) and as a senior member of the staff. The finance director cannot be hesitant about rolling up his/her sleeves both with specific aspects of financial operations of the organization and with overall stewardship of the organization and offices.
- Willingness to be approachable and consultative in dealings with staff at all levels and willing to serve as a teacher/trainer to staff on financial administration.
- Ability to think strategically about how changes in the funding environment, especially federal grant funds, may affect the FRCOG operations and staffing.

### **Educational and Experience Requirements**

In possession of a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting, Finance or a related field and a minimum of seven years of professional experience with at least five in fiscal management or auditing and/or financial oversight and reporting of federal and state grants or equivalent combination of education and experience. The knowledge typically gained by obtaining a graduate degree in Public Administration, Business Administration, Accounting or similar field or as a CPA is preferred.

### **Salary and Schedule**

Applications should be received by **December 1, 2017 although resumes/CVs will be reviewed until the position is filled.** The FRCOG hopes to have a new Director of Finance in place by March 2018. The cash compensation range is

\$85,000-\$105,000 DOQ. FRCOG is willing to negotiate a competitive compensation with the selected candidate and may consider an allowance for relocation. There is no residency requirement.

### **How to Apply**

Applications are preferred electronically. Please send your resume with a cover letter addressing the job requirements to [lindad@frcog.org](mailto:lindad@frcog.org). Please combine all of your documents in a single pdf file, if possible. **FRCOG\_FD** and the applicant's **Last Name** must be included in the subject line.

Should you have any questions regarding this opportunity, or a recommendation of a colleague, please contact: Dick Kobayashi, Collins Center Senior Associate 617-489-8812, or Mary Flanders Aicardi, Collins Center Senior Associate 508-215-8992, or Linda Dunlavy, FRCOG Executive Director 413-774-3167 ext. 103.