

Damon Howell

Seasoned local government professional with over 22 years of experience in the finance and accounting fields. With a strong background in financial record keeping and reporting, annual budget preparation, payroll, ensuring timely payments to vendors, auditing, internal controls, and contract compliance reporting. Timely communicates essential information to management and other key stakeholders. Works to remain current on applicable financial and accounting standards.

Work History

2019-08
- present

Comptroller

Finance & Administration Department, Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Chicago, IL

Responsible for preparation of District financial reports & completing annual audit in a timely and accurate manner

- Directs supervision of District's books and records reflecting, receipts, disbursements, liabilities and financial position
- Engages and collaborates with external audit team to complete District's ACFR and applicable grant reporting
- Supports CFO's monthly financial reporting to District governing board and other stakeholders
- Partner with CFO to provide analysis of key financial metrics to District leadership
- Supervises accounting team

Responsible for preparation of District's annual appropriation ordinance, budget and G/L management

- Collaborates with CFO to produce budget recommendation and appropriation ordinance books
- Maintains records of budgetary appropriations, expenditures, encumbrances and revenues during the fiscal year (District's FY2023 appropriation approx. \$182M)
- Assisted CFO with completing recent District Bond Refunding
- Coordinates with Grant Administrator to manage grant budgeting, expense tracking & applicable reporting
- Communicate with user departments staff to resolve budget issues and requests

Responsible for bi-weekly payroll disbursements

- Reviews and approves payment of bi-weekly payroll (Approx. 600+ employees)
- Reviews and approves payment of 3rd parties and applicable taxes
- Oversees preparation and distribution of employee W-2 forms
- Supervises payroll activities

Responsible for approval of vendor payments, refunds, applicable IRS reporting

- Reviews and approves weekly disbursements to District vendors, including payments for workers' compensation and refunds
- Oversight of preparation and distribution of 1099 forms to District vendors and 1096 IRS reporting
- Supervises accounts payable team

Personal Info

Email

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Phone

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Address

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Skills

Financial Reporting

Budget Forecasting

Payroll Processing

Auditing

Internal Controls

Analytical Review

Supervising

Contract Compliance

Oracle EBS, SharePoint, CCT

Microsoft Suite: Access, Excel, PowerPoint, Word

2013-06
- 2019-08

Field Auditor V

*Office of the Cook County Auditor, Cook County Government,
Chicago, IL*

- Responsible for performing internal audits of various County agencies/businesses/contracts
- Collaborate with Audit Supervisors, develop and document plans for each audit, determine audit objectives, audit scope, budget and requisite resources
- Supervise and train new field auditors
- Performs internal audits including financial, compliance and operational
- Consults with department directors and managers developing and implementing long and short-range plans designed to insure continued improvement and effectiveness of operations
- Implement programs to achieve audit objectives
- Complete audits within budget and time deadlines
- Conduct interviews with various County agencies to obtain an understanding of agency operations and internal control structure
- Procure and document understanding of an agency's internal control structure, modify audit program based on understanding of internal control structure
- Assess degrees of risk associated with specific accounts and classes of transactions to determine audit procedures
- Perform tests of internal controls, account balances and compliance with applicable laws and ordinances
- Prepare analytical reviews, re-computation of account balances and evaluate accounting estimates for accuracy
- Prepare reports to document audit procedures and evidence analyzed, evaluated, and conclusions reached
- Communicated results of audit performed through preparation of audit reports and management letters
- Effectively manage multiple projects

2001-07
- 2013-06

Field Auditor III & IV

*Office of the Cook County Auditor, Cook County Government,
Chicago, IL*

- Responsible for gathering and analyzing data for internal audits
- Perform audits including financial, compliance and operational
- Perform special reviews at the direction of the department head and managers
- Determines the adequacy and effectiveness of the County's systems of internal accounting and operation controls
- Reviews the reliability and integrity of financial information and the means used to identify measure, classify and report such information
- Review the means of safeguarding assets and as appropriate, verify the existence of such assets
- Review operations and programs to ascertain whether results are consistent with established objectives and goals and whether the operations or programs are being carried out as planned in accordance with relevant regulations
- Gather data for internal audit through a variety of methods including interviews, observation, and system downloads, research, etc
- Obtains and documents an understanding of an agency's internal control structure
- Assesses the degree of risk associated with specific accounts and classes of transactions for purposes of determining audit procedures
- Develops engagement objectives and tests to evaluate the objectives
- Perform tests of controls, account balances and compliance with laws and

ordinances

- Prepare audit program to document audit procedures and evidence
- Discusses audit findings and recommendations with auditee to verify understanding and corrective action plans
- Prepare letters detailing audit findings and recommendations
- Prepare audit reports and management letters to appropriately represent the results of the audit
- Performs other related duties as assigned

Education

- 2009-08 **Accounting, Master of Science**
Governor's State University, University Park, IL

- 2000-05 **Accounting & Business Management, Bachelor of Arts**
Augustana College, Rock Island, IL