

# FINANCE DIRECTOR

ELM GROVE,  
WISCONSIN



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# FINANCE DIRECTOR ELM GROVE, WISCONSIN

## THE POSITION IN BRIEF

The Finance Director is a key member of the village's management team in a financially stable organization, and reports to the Village Manager. The position oversees the finance department assuring that the village achieves its financial objectives through solid fiscal planning, budgetary controls, and the maintenance of financial accounts and records. In concert with the Village Manager, the Director develops and manages a general fund budget of approximately \$8 million, and combined budgets of around \$11 million.





## THE COMMUNITY

Early settlers were first drawn to this fertile agricultural area during the mid-1830s. In 1848, the year of Wisconsin's statehood, some industrious people decided to start laying more than 650,000 white oak timbers and planks to make it easier to travel the 58 miles from Milwaukee to Watertown. That is how the Village's main thoroughfare, Watertown Plank Road, began.

In 1856, the railroad, later known as the Milwaukee Road, laid a track line which intersected the plank road, thus giving rise to even greater community development. Railroad officials charged with choosing a name to designate the stop took one look at the vast growth of trees and said, "We'll call it Elm Grove."

Once part of the 36 square mile Town of Brookfield, the [Village of Elm Grove](#) has retained not only its footprint since its incorporation in 1955 but much of its small-town charm as well. Today, at a population of 6,513, Elm Grove is widely considered a premier outer ring suburb where the natural beauty of sloping hills and forested properties creates a true urban-rural living experience. Strong community involvement and engagement is what contributes to the Village's unique character and charm. Strategically located just 15 minutes west of downtown Milwaukee and one hour east of Madison, Elm Grove combines the convenience and amenities of the greater Milwaukee area with the independence and friendliness of a small town.

## A SNAPSHOT OF ELM GROVE'S DEMOGRAPHICS AND AMENITIES:

Population **6,513**

Average age **42.7** years old

White **89%**, Asian **4%**, African American **3%**, Hispanic Origin and other races **4%**

Median household income **\$126,996**

Median value of a Elm Grove home **\$433,300**

- An exceptional school district serves the community – [Elmbrook School District](#). Private and parochial school choices can also be found in the area.
- Elm Grove encompasses **3.29** square miles, of which there are currently five Village-owned park/open space sites, with a total acreage of nearly **97** acres, or roughly **4%** of the Village. The largest, [Village Park](#), has a considerable number of amenities including two ball diamonds, nine tennis courts, six pickleball courts, two sand volleyball courts, a heated swimming pool and splash pad, as well as a sledding hill, and picnic areas.
- Elm Grove residents have access to several major medical systems in the greater Milwaukee/Waukesha area including [Aurora Health Care](#), [Froedtert](#) and [Ascension](#) health systems.
- Distinguished institutions of higher learning are located within a close drive to Elm Grove. Chief among them include the [University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee](#), [Marquette University](#), [Carroll University](#), and [Concordia University Wisconsin](#). Other noteworthy institutions include [Waukesha County Technical College](#) and the [Milwaukee Area Technical College](#).

## VILLAGE GOVERNMENT IN ELM GROVE

The legislative body of the village is the Village Board. The board is comprised of seven volunteer individuals elected to serve two-year terms. One trustee serves as the Village President and all Trustees either chair or are members of the various committees. Their primary function is to serve as the policy-setting and legislative body governing activities of the Village government. The policies of the village are set by the Village Board and Village President. The President, Trustees and Village staff established a culture of professionalism and mutual respect for each other's role in the organization. The new Finance Director can expect to join a highly functional, progressive, and productive Village leadership team.

Elm Grove is a full-service municipality including Police, Fire, EMS, Public Works, Planning and Zoning, Recreation, Library and administrative services such as Administration, Assessor, Finance, Clerk, and Municipal Court. The Village employs a staff of about 50 full-time, and 130 part-time and seasonal employees. All Village departments report to the Village Manager with the exception of those defined by state statutes to report to another individual or entity.

The village's budgets, all funds, are more than \$11 million. The general fund budget's expenditures are approximately \$8 million. There are two TIF Districts. The village maintains A1 bond rating from Moody's and enjoys a healthy fund balance of more than 25%.



## FINANCE DEPARTMENT

The Director oversees the Finance Department, and together with part-time administrative assistants, the Village Clerk (who also serves as Deputy Treasurer) and Village Manager, form a team to oversee the fiscal health of the Village. In addition, the Finance Department is responsible for the accounting and financial reporting of all village operations and is entrusted with collecting, depositing, and investing all village funds. This includes accounts payable (handled by the Clerk), billing and collections, investment and cash management, maintenance of all financial records, payroll, and property tax collections. An additional employee in this area is under consideration for FY 2025.



## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

In a work culture charged with energy and an environment that seeks excellence, the new Finance Director will be faced with a number of challenges that offer exciting opportunities. They include:

**Financial Condition.** The village is in good financial shape as evidenced by its equalized value of \$ 1.45 billion, the maintenance of its A1 bond rating from Moody's, and a healthy unassigned fund balance. One of the village's strengths is reflected in the level of its fund balances and its fiscal planning.

Historically, the village's policy requires maintenance of not less than 20 percent uncommitted general fund expenditures. In 2024, the Village's reserves are healthy, currently maintaining 25 percent of uncommitted General Fund Balance. In addition to the management of existing debt and associated reserves, the Village also forecasts future debt within a framework of policies, priorities and financial capacity.

The Village's total net position, net of related debt, exceeded liabilities by \$30,628,523 at the close of 2022. The largest segment of net position is the Village's investment in capital assets. The Village reports land, land improvements, building, equipment, intangible assets, and infrastructure. Beginning in 2015 the Village implemented GASB 68 recognizing the Village's share of future pension obligations as a participant in the multi-employer Wisconsin Retirement System.

In partnership with the Village Manager, the Finance Director plays an integral role in the development of the village's annual budget and Capital Improvement Plan. The new Finance Director can expect to be a leader in this area, working with a host of elected and staff stakeholders, to assure that the budgeting priorities reflect the Village's strategic interests and financial realities.

Redevelopment opportunities and a robust list of projects on the horizon present exciting challenges and opportunities for the Village, and the next Finance Director will be a key player in these changes. For instance, the Village is exploring bringing Lake Michigan water to downtown businesses. In conjunction with that, the Village is updating its downtown redevelopment master plan. Stormwater management in several key Village areas, and the addition of pathways and the on-going need for roadway improvements, are among a few projects in the pipeline.

Not unlike other mature upper Midwest communities, the village has older subdivisions with aging infrastructure, and thus a considerable list of capital needs. Their prioritization through the development of an integrated five-year capital improvements plan, coupled with long-term financial planning, will require an adept hand on the part of the Finance Director in partnership with the Village Manager and the village's financial advisor.

All told, the next Director can expect to play an important role in assuring the long-term health of the village's own financial operations. The Director can also expect to work closely with village officials and community leaders to develop and execute plans for boosting and sustaining Elm Grove's economic viability.

**Fiscal management.** The Village Board and Village Manager are dedicated to progressive, innovative and continuous improvement. The new Finance Director will assist the Village Manager to critically examine the organization and over time, evaluate organizational design, service delivery processes and the ways in which the workforce is deployed to meet the needs of an organization that will need to be financially nimble. In addition, the management team will need to remain cognizant of the challenges that a mature, premiere community needs to maintain its appeal as a community of choice, and what pressure that may bear on the organization's facilities, amenities and infrastructure.

The village's population will likely grow, but gradually, as the multi-family and single-family development project Caroline Heights comes on-line. Yet as is typical for Wisconsin municipalities, service demands and costs increase, and the ability to raise revenues is limited given the nature of state tax levy restrictions. The next Finance Director can expect to work with the Village Manager, and the rest of the management team, to develop a sustainable staffing plan.

**Transparency and Teamwork.** The Village's Finance Department uses Banyon as its financial software and has been working to make financial reporting more accessible to department heads. The next Finance Director can expect to continue this effort, assuring that the management team and elected officials have on-demand, unencumbered, and transparent access to the Village's financial information.

**Financial Reporting.** The incoming Finance Director can expect to be a strong management partner with the Village Manager by keeping a wide-angled look on the organization while simultaneously possessing agile financial and accounting skills that can focus on the details when required. The Finance Director is viewed by the rest of the management team as a key resource, supporting and advising them on their operations' finances and strategic goals. Along these lines, and over time, the Finance Director can expect to work on enhancing the village's budget and financial documents.



# THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

## Education and Experience

- A B.A. in accounting, business administration, finance or related field; a Master's degree and/or CPA is preferred, but not required.
- Three or more years' experience with financial reporting and budgeting.
- Three or more years of experience in a government setting or demonstrable skills in governmental fund accounting; a combination of public and private sector finance experience is ideal.
- Working knowledge of financial management/ERP systems.
- Possess financial management skills to guide a dynamic, financially sound organization. Strong financial management abilities, including financial forecasting, revenue enhancement, capital improvement programming, and budget development and control. Have a keen understanding about governmental fund accounting.
- Have the ability to view the community and organization from 30,000 feet while maintaining a close eye on the daily details of managing multi-million-dollar enterprises, i.e., be able to juggle spreadsheet skills with an organic view of the organization.
- Have the experience and judgment to recognize the need for change when it arises, and the leadership skills, political savvy, technical competence, and courage to recommend such change.
- Have a working knowledge of economic development strategies; fluency in tax incremental financing is important.
- Have a record of keeping current with modern, innovative municipal technology, programs and procedures, understanding how technology can be used to enhance transparency in government, increase efficiencies and provide better customer service for residents.



## Management Style and Personal Traits

- Have complete personal and professional integrity, gaining respect and inspiring the trust and confidence of subordinates, co-workers, and elected and appointed officials, as well as the general public.
- Have an enthusiasm for public service and teamwork, especially in a small-staffed, fast-paced environment that occasionally requires the management group to have "all hands on deck."
- Be a clear and concise communicator, including the ability to actively listen.
- Possess the ability to build collaborative relationships with a variety of internal and external stakeholders.
- Be a team member that appreciates the need to provide accurate, timely and transparent information to fellow department heads and Village Manager.
- Be proactive, anticipatory and innovative; be someone who can make difficult decisions and stand behind those decisions.
- Be willing to keep the Village Board and Village Manager apprised of the state of the village's finances, major activities and/or village operations in a consistent and timely manner, passing on both good news and bad news in a tactful, self-confident and professional manner.



## COMPENSATION, BENEFITS AND THE ORGANIZATION'S CULTURE

The starting salary is \$95,000 - \$105,000 +/- DOQ, plus exceptional benefits. The village is part of the Wisconsin Retirement System.

The organization prides itself on its commitment to customer service and teamwork. Staff has a lot of daily interaction with one another and report strong interdepartmental relations. The village's organization strives to be a workplace of choice, and village staff possesses a high-output work ethic.

The President and Board of Trustees possess a strong respect for village staff's work. Among themselves, elected officials are collegial and respectful of differing perspectives and points of view.

## HOW TO APPLY

Candidates should apply a.s.a.p. but no later than June 10, 2024 as the review of resumes and offers to interview will be on-going. The position is open until filled. Send a resume, cover letter and contact information for five work-related references to [www.GovHRjobs.com](http://www.GovHRjobs.com) to the attention of Lee Szymborski, Senior Vice President, GovHR USA, 630 Dundee Road, #225, Northbrook, IL 60062. Tel: 847-380-3240. The Village is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

