



ASMC Gulf Coast Chapter Newsletter

Aug
2023

**ASMC Gulf Coast
Chapter**

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Mrs. Deborah Washington

President's Corner

Written by Deborah A. Washington, President

Greetings Gulf Coast Chapter members,

Welcome to a new and exciting ASMC year. This will be the year of "Recharging the Workforce". I have been a member of this chapter for almost 30 years, and it's great to be back leading the future AF financial management professionals.

Those that know me, know that I am a straight shooter, so let me give you a dose of why I accepted the challenge to lead our organization. The bottom line is that no one else would (and the previous President had carried the responsibility for way too long). We were in jeopardy of the chapter being inactive. I just could not let that happen. Additionally, because of recent changes, the chapter did not maintain its 5-Star Status requirements. This is a first since I have been a member (over 30 years!). It has been a legacy and privilege to be recognized as a top-tier chapter across ASMC. I tell you this because I need every member to help! As a team, we can work together to continue the greatness of this Chapter and be proudly recognized as such!

ASMC is a great way to hone your leadership skills, increase your public speaking abilities and meet new people. The chapter is still in need of some key positions and maybe someone reading this message will rise to the challenge.

President's Message Continued Next Page...

Program News

Written by

Jon Slingerland

&

Mandy Chapman

Past Meeting Summary

Meeting was held at Ft Walton Beach Country Club on June 27, 2023, at 1100. Ms. Washington briefed regarding the ASMC Gulf Coast return to 5-Star status. She will be meeting with the Division CFOs to ignite the attendance shortfall for monthly luncheons. The scholarship awards will be announced by Ms. Bynum when scoring packages are received and completed. Future community service activities to include Fisher House, Beach clean-up, and “Give a Child a Christmas” were discussed. More ideas are welcome, and volunteers are always needed. A discussion arose about bringing a friend to sign-up for new membership to increase size and participation. Ms. Hoppel said that we may be able pay for some new members’ lunches for coming out and participating. In closing, Ms. Washington said she will be visiting with Hurlburt Field and Eglin leadership to gain support for active member participation.

An additional ASMC Professional Development Luncheon was held on 27 July at 1130 at the Clubhouse Grill. It included an experienced mentoring panel consisting of Mr. Ray Graber, Ms. Michelle Woolgar, and Mr. Justin Neece. Meeting summary details will be provided in the next newsletter, please stay tuned.

A big thank you to Maika Andrew and Rose Gyampo for stepping up and volunteering to lead the programs committee for our chapter!

Future Meeting Announcement

Be on the lookout for an upcoming luncheon in August where we will recognize our scholarship winners.

President’s Corner continued...

I can promise that the current executive committee is ready and willing to assist in every endeavor. Our Gulf Coast Chapter has a long history of providing excellent training, networking amongst like professionals, and building relationships that lead to opportunities at all levels. Let’s recapture our identity and continue to make a difference in our workforce and communities.

Let’s get ready to RECHARGE, you don’t want to miss out!

Have the best day ever.

Respectfully,

*Deborah A
Washington,
President, ASMC
Gulf Coast Chapter*

Community News

Upcoming opportunities and news

Please be on the lookout for future community service opportunities in the upcoming newsletters. In the past, ASMC Gulf Coast Chapter has volunteered our time and service to organizations such as Fisher House, Shelter House, ECCAC, & Pet Welfare.

Care Packages

If you would like to donate to care packages that go to our deployed FM members, please contact
Patrick DeWitt.

*Thank you for being the reason
someone smiled!*



2023 Florida Back to School Sales Tax Holiday Dates:

Begins on Monday, July 24, 2023, at 12:01 a.m.
Ends on Sunday, August 6, 2023, at 11:59 p.m.
(And again January 1 – 14, 2024)

WHAT IS TAX FREE IN FLORIDA:

- **Clothing, footwear, and certain accessories selling for \$100 or less per item** (Clothing, wallets, or bags, including handbags, backpacks, fanny packs, and diaper bags. Excludes briefcases, suitcases, and other garment bags) Note this is ANY item of clothing on the allowed list, including clothing and footwear for adults.
- **School uniforms less than \$100 per item**
- **Certain school supplies selling for \$50 or less per item:** pencils, erasers, crayons, notebooks, notebook filler paper, legal pads, binders, lunch boxes, construction paper, markers, folders, poster board, composition books, poster paper, scissors, cellophane tape, glue or paste, rulers, computer disks, staplers and staples used to secure paper products, protractors, compasses, and calculators.
- **Learning aids and jigsaw puzzles that cost \$30 or less per item:** flashcards or other learning cards, matching or other memory games, puzzle books and search-and-find books, interactive or electronic books and toys intended to teach reading or math skills, and stacking or nesting blocks or sets.
- **The first \$1,500 of the sales price of personal computers or personal computer-related accessories purchased for noncommercial home or personal use.** This includes e-book readers and tablets.

Awards

We would like to congratulate all the ASMC Gulf Coast winners...

Budgeting : Sandra Berkley

Comptroller : Jonathan Pinto

Intern : Winston Graves

Resource Management: Joshua Summerfield

Acquisition Cost: Gardner Munn

Small Team: AFRL Accounting Branch

Large Team: EBX Agile Weapons

Finance: Dane Manfredi

Auditing: Ederick Tayor

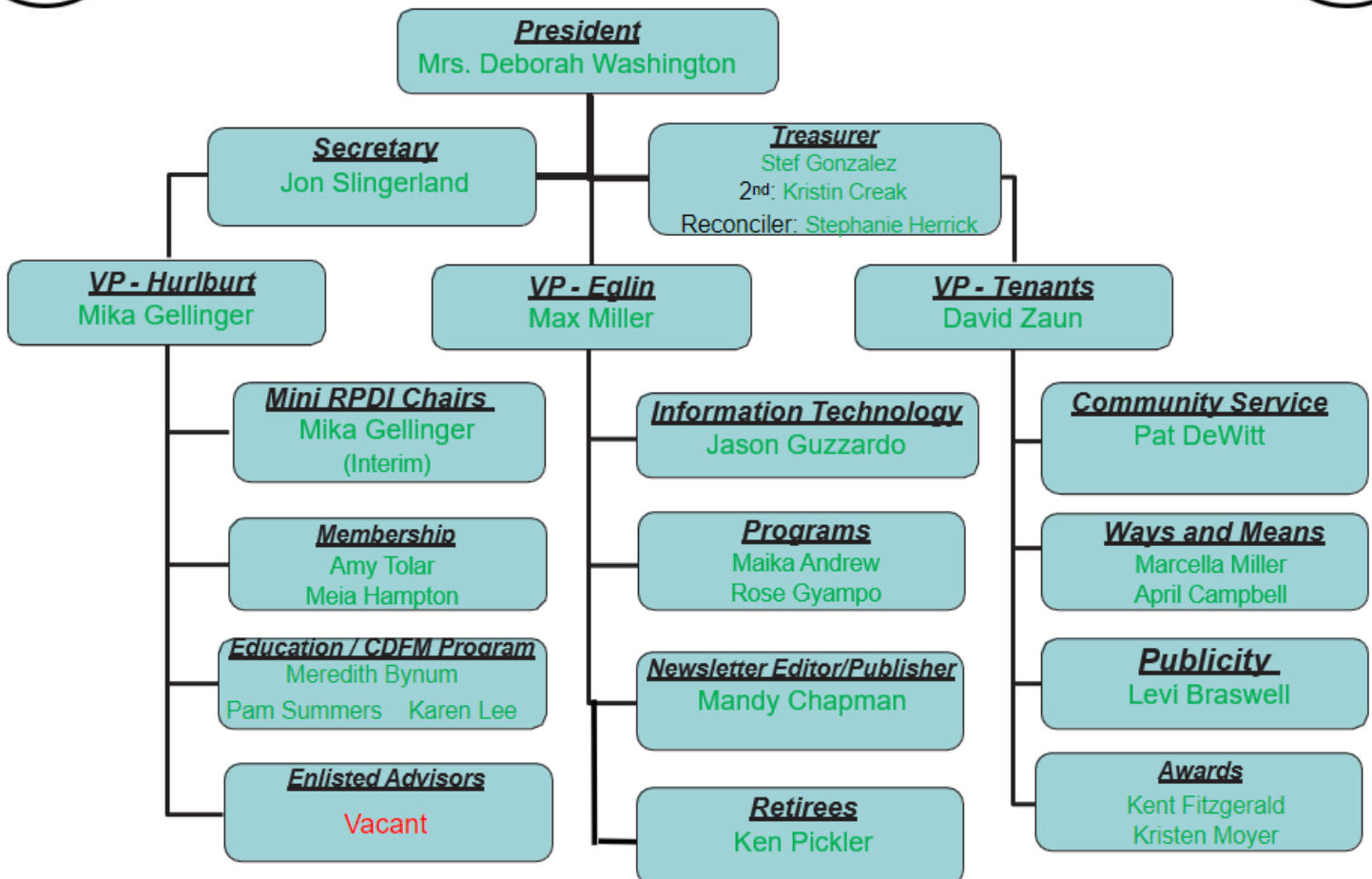
Contractor Support: Shelly Leugers

Although none of our chapter winners won at nationals, you are still #1 in all our hearts!

Org Chart



2023-2024 Gulf Coast Chapter





Program/Speaker Lineup

Future Meetings

August 2023
Scholarship
Presentations
TBA

Past Meetings

27 July 2023
“Recharge the
Workforce”

Experienced Panel Discussion

Mr. Graber, Ms. Woolgar, &
Mr. Neece

27 June 2023
“Recharge the
Workforce”

The Path to Success!
Mrs. Deborah Washington

Education

The education committee is consolidating the scoring of the scholarship packages and will be announcing all the winners soon. Scholarship presentations are tentatively scheduled for our August luncheon.

RPDI

Our annual RPDI was held at Hurlburt Field Soundside on April 26. Speakers were AFLCMC/EB, AFLCMC/FZC, 350 SWW/FM, AFRL/RWF, AFSOC/FM, 96 TW/FM, Ms. Teresa Schutter, Ms. Sara Connolly-Somich, Mr. Roger Marchese, Dennis Gaxiola, and Mr. Chip Fulghum. Here are a few pictures:



The next RPDI is projected for April 2024. Two co-chairs and additional committee members are needed! Please consider volunteering.

Retiree Update

Written by
Ken Pickler

The chapter retiree corps is currently focused on two key areas: mentoring and fundraising. Both are critical to success as individual financial professionals and as a chapter.

I'll be contacting retirees in my personal network during August and September. Initial plans are to invite the mentor corps to attend the Oktoberfest, so they can meet potential mentees in person. I'd appreciate your assistance in getting the word out to retired financial managers that you think would be great mentors. I signed Cleo Battle up at her retirement luncheon on 20 July 2023. See photo below...thanks and congrats, Cleo!!



Our Executive Council members are working together to get necessary clearances to begin fundraising via contacts with local businesses that might be interested in contributions to our scholarships. I'm looking for people that will help reach out to those potential partners in promoting financial excellence via scholarships to students pursuing degrees related to comptrollership.

What I learned from National PDI

By Josh Summerfield

Attending National PDI was an incredibly beneficial experience. As it was my first time attending the conference, I was not sure what to expect. However, I was impressed by the number of attendees, organization of the event, and quality of material presented. Not only did I learn relevant information from the presenters, but I also gained valuable connections with other financial managers across the DoD. It was interesting to compare how our day-to-day duties differ; yet, we still face some of the same challenges. The conference did an excellent job reiterating the importance of FM and its relevance to the DoD mission for the protection of our country.

The Power of Self-Reflection

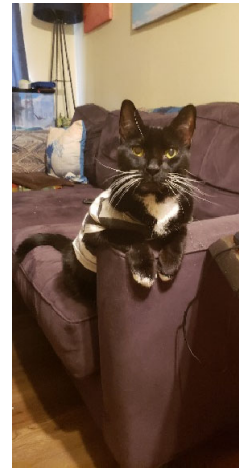
By Mandy Chapman

Dale Carnegie once said, “When dealing with people, remember you are not dealing with creatures of logic, but with creatures of emotion.” Lately, I have focused on intelligently managing my emotions. As leaders in financial management, it is important that we establish emotional intelligence. As I became self-aware, I realized I was holding onto unforgiveness. My pastor says, “Holding onto unforgiveness is like drinking poison, hoping the other person will die.” It is useless and the only person left hurting is yourself. Here’s to letting go of the past and forgiving hurt so that it no longer has any power over us!

MEMBERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Featuring a new member each month

Ms. Jordan Brown



Our new member spotlight this month is on Ms. Jordan Brown who works at AFLCMC/EBD as a Developmental Cost Analyst in weapons procurement.

Let's connect and get to know Jordan a little better...

What are your hobbies/sports team/activities? Passing time at coffee shops, spending time on the patio while it rains, crochet, embroidery, and other fiber arts.

What's your favorite FM tip for someone? If you don't know how to do something, ask someone (or multiple people) until you have a clear understanding of the process.

What is your favorite thing about working at Eglin? While I have only worked on base for a short time, my favorite thing is how friendly everyone is. I also enjoy seeing the jets flying around base.

What's your favorite quote? "You may write me down in history with your bitter, twisted lies. You may trod me in the very dirt. But still, like dust, I'll rise." – Maya Angelou

If you won a million dollars, what is the first thing you would buy? At least one property and then I would probably put the rest in various investment portfolios.

Do you collect anything? As most people who crochet, knit, or do other yarn work, I have an impressive hoard of yarn (that I swear I am going to use for projects).

What's your favorite vacation spot? I'm not much of a spender, and I'm even less of a vacationer, so there are two answers: The inside of clean bedsheets with wine or cider, and a movie/tv-show. Anywhere in the mountains in Fall or early Spring.

Do you have any pets? I have one cat, whose name is Carson. He is a 14-year-old, domestic nuisance shorthair with a tuxedo coat, and diabetes.

Member News

Announcements

ASMC Gulf Coast Chapter would like to welcome our newest members to the team! Below is a list of our new members since January 2023. Thank you all for joining our chapter. We can't wait to connect with you and learn more about you at our next professional development session or at a community event in the future! Please consider leading or joining one of our committees. Mission success is not possible without you. Thank you!

*Zechariah Armstrong
Mary Avalon
Tiffany Barnhardt
Teresa F. Benthall
Jordan Brown
Cherri Cable
Curtis Cline
Alex Jacob Eden
David Erickson
Gardner Talbert Munn
Stephanie Pettus
William J. Reistrom
Jacqueline Rios
Michael Skipper
Joshua Summerfield
Mary Tims
Shawn P. West*



Did you or someone you know recently move to another organization at Eglin? If so, you or someone you know might have dropped off the ASMC distro. Be sure to send an email to aac.asmcgulfcoast@us.af.mil so you don't miss any future communication and announcements.



New to the Eglin AFB FM team? Visit the link below to enroll to be an ASMC member. Select Gulf Coast Chapter or log into your account to transfer to our chapter.

Contact Amy Tolar, membership chair, for more information or to be added to the ASMC distro. <https://asmconline.org/membership/>

Installation of New Officers

Congratulations to our new 2023-2024 Gulf Coast Chapter officers! Mrs. Deborah Washington, Chapter President, Mr. David Zaun, Tenant VP, Ms. Mika Gellinger, Hurlburt VP, and Mr. Max Miller, Eglin VP (not pictured). Thank you, Mrs. Judy Davis, for officiating the ceremony!



Announcements



We still need a committee chair for the Enlisted Advisors. Now that most of our chairs/co-chairs are established, we need additional committee members. Please consider volunteering or encouraging someone to volunteer. It is a great leadership and networking opportunity! It also looks great on appraisals and award nominations. Thank you to everyone who has already accepted the challenge and volunteered for a committee!



National ASMC News

Defense Financial Highlights

The Business of Defense Podcast Wraps Up Season 1

By Rich Brady

July 11, 2023

The American Society of Military Comptrollers recently completed Season 1 of The Business of Defense video podcast, produced in conjunction with WTOP News/Federal News Network.

Thank you to our guests from across the defense sector – the bigs, the smalls, the partnerships and private equity owned, and the SDVOBS, ESOPS, and EDWOSBs – who joined us over the past 12 months. These business leaders brought us inside their companies to talk about the challenges and opportunities of operating in the federal and defense sectors.

Key insights from Season 1:

- Organizational structure can be a competitive advantage, but each structure has pros/cons and can affect growth strategies and competition for government contracts.
- Uncertainty in government funding and the government contracting process increases risk...and increased risk increases cost for companies and the government. Large companies have greater capacity to manage risk and uncertainty through capital reserves and credit markets; small firms have less capacity to manage risk, particularly contract disruptions or work stoppages.
- Operating margins in the audit/advisory/consulting space are thin, particularly for small firms whose margins can be further reduced as a sub-contractor on a prime contract. But even small margins can be lucrative given the size of government spending.
- Mentorship is important at all levels – early careerist to CEO. No c-suite executive achieved their position without mentorship throughout their career, and they see the value in giving back through mentorship.
- Strategic planning in the startup phase tends to be emergent and opportunistic but evolves into a more deliberate process for growth-oriented companies as they seek expansion into new business areas, gain access to outside funding and M&A, and establish advisory and fiduciary boards.

Many thanks to Sunny Singh from Aeyon, Mike Monson from Definitive Logic, Todd Johnston formerly with BDO, Ché Bolden from the Charles F. Bolden Group, Mary Ahern Snyder from Significance, Dawn Sedgley from cBEYONData, Richard Manley from Thompson Gray, Inc., M. John Saad from Guidehouse, Richard Pineda from CALIBRE Systems, Inc., Ryan Waguespack, CPA from Iberia Advisory, Horace Blackman from CGI, Dave Sterling from Royce Geo, and R.J. Blake, CPA, CGFM from the Blake Willson Group, LLC for giving us the insights into how they create value for their companies and their customers.

National News

Federal Report

Sequestration, sequestration, se – Wait, don't summon the S-word!

By Jason Miller

July 10, 2023

If the fiscal 2024 budget process was a baseball game, we'd still be in the early innings.

And like in baseball, where no lead is safe, what the bills look like today is far from what they will look like on Oct. 1 or Nov. 1 or even Jan. 1, whenever Congress passes, and the President signs, a final set of spending bills.

The one thing that seems certain, is lawmakers will not get the budget done by Oct. 1, leaving agencies with yet another continuing resolution and opening the door, ever so slightly, for the return of the "S" word — sequestration.

Just don't say it more than three times, or like Beetlejuice, if you say it too often, it will appear out of the ether.

It's been a decade since agencies faced that ugly "S" word, and 2013 was the first time since the 1980s.

If you aren't familiar with the "S" word, then you probably were in college, high school or even the private sector back in 2013. But those of who were around and remember the "S" word, even the slight possibility of a return sends shivers down your spine.

"In 2013, agencies took a massive hatchet to their discretionary spending," said Matthew Cornelius, a former Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs staff member. "Broadly speaking, House Republicans are making different calculations today than they did in 2013 with the Budget Control Act."

The Budget Control Act ushered in the "S" word — OK we can say it a second time, sequestration — and it required Obama administration leaders to cut discretionary spending by about \$85 billion in 2013, which ended up being about a 7.8% cut to Defense agencies and a 5% cut to civilian agencies.

The pain of those cuts took years to rebound from, and even the possibility of it returning should force federal executives and industry leaders to stand up and take notice.

Self-imposed Jan. 1 deadline

The reason why you should even be thinking about the "S" word is if Congress doesn't pass a 2024 spending bill by Jan. 1, the debt ceiling deal from June includes an automatic 1% across the board cut. While it may not technically be called the "S" word, the cut will be felt the same no matter.

"Lawmakers already are saying they are looking to get this done by Jan. 1," said Mike Hettinger, president of Hettinger Strategies and a former House oversight committee staff member. "This leads me to believe they will try to do a CR sooner than later and get the final spending bill off the table to avoid the automatic cuts." Congressional watchers, however, say this doesn't mean all is well in appropriations land.

Federal executives still should be keenly aware of the possibility of a cut to their program.

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Hettinger said the difference between the initial versions of the House and Senate spending bill is about \$100 billion. And this doesn't even take into account what the Biden administration put forward in March.

"The biggest issues we are facing is not the House or Senate bill, but how they come to agreement when you have delta that is \$80 billion to \$110 billion difference?" Hettinger said. "In order to get a bill done, someone will have to blink and it's not clear who that is. In recent memory, I don't remember a delta that great. Usually it's \$15 billion-to-\$20 billion between the two bills. This will be difficult to find a number to coalesce around."

How to shore up your programs

And that is both the rub and concern that federal executives should be preparing for. It seems likely that cuts to programs, especially those Republicans labeled as "woke" are coming in one way, shape or form. These could include green government priorities such as electrifying the federal fleet or getting federal buildings to zero emissions.

Jeff Newman, an attorney with Thompson Coburn, said there are some programs or areas that likely are safe like national security, veterans and even things like cybersecurity and digital services.

"I don't think agencies will see huge increases like we did in year's past. It will be more of a reprioritizing of assets and monies to certain industries and programs and priorities that the government has both domestically and internationally," Newman said. "Some of domestic programs you feel good about are likely in trouble, while you will see increases around things that support Ukraine's war effort, the intelligence community and manufacturing and additive technologies to improve the supply chains of critical products."

Over the next few months, federal executives and industry leaders should take some steps to shore up support for their programs.

Experts say first figure out how much attention Congress is giving to your program or area.

"Because of years of out-of-control spending, it has been and will continue to be my priority to pass conservative bills that focus our limited resources on the core responsibilities of the federal government, including national defense, our veterans and our border," said House Appropriations Chairwoman Kay Granger (R-Texas) in a June 12 statement.

Emily Murphy, a former House Small Business and Armed Services staff member and administrator of the General Services Administration, said while it's too soon for federal executives to panic, they need to act quickly to understand, what, if any are the concerns lawmakers have with your program.

Murphy recommended first talking to your agency's Congressional Affairs office as they can be helpful to address specific concerns and ensure the messaging is consistent.

She also said executives should make sure they are a part of budget briefings and be available as a resource to answer questions from the Congressional Affairs office or from the hill.

Spend your 2023 funding

At the same time, Murphy, who now is a senior fellow with the Center for Government Contracting at George Mason University and consults with government contractors, said when she was a staff member on the Hill, she always enjoyed hearing directly from federal employees.

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National News

“Congressional Affairs was fine, but I felt like I would get more candid answers without Congressional Affairs. At the same time, those conversations could get self serving too, especially if the employee was throwing another program under the bus,” Murphy said. “I kept a Rolodex of direct phone numbers and didn’t hesitate to reach out to program folks. Some would talk to me and others would say they have to go Congressional Affairs.”

She also cautioned against “freelancing” with Hill staff as it may cause your agency some unnecessary heartache.

Hettinger recommended working with OMB and your agency’s authorizing committees to make sure they know what your objections or concerns are about potential cuts to a program.

As for the rest of 2023, David Berteau, the president of the Professional Services Council and a former DoD assistant secretary of Defense for logistics and materiel readiness, offered these considerations.

First, program officials should spend the money they have in 2023. A CR heading into 2024 means no new starts, but agencies can continue initiatives begun previously.

Second, plant the seeds that will grow into the out years like 2025 and beyond.

“Under the debt limit deal, agencies could only see as much as a 1% increase and inflation isn’t not going to be below 1%, so you must be thinking about how 2023 is setting your stage for 2024 and 2025,” he said.

Third, be prepared for unexpected turbulence. “Many agencies are still ahead of what they received in 2023 based on what the House and Senate mark up. The real threat is to DoD if Congress doesn’t get a spending bill done by Jan. 1 because they will not get the expected 3.3% increase and will face a 1% cut, which is about \$30 billion. That will have a real impact on DoD,” Berteau said.

One last signal executives should look out for is what comes out in appropriations committee markups and reports, where lawmakers offer a bit more explanations for their decisions.

Murphy called these two documents good indicators of where the bill is going.

“Comparing the House and Senate versions will help you hone in on where the controversies may be,” she said. “The other place to look is the amendments offered to the defense authorization bill, which frequently indicate where members are trying to make something happen on appropriations side.”

And if it looks like your program is going to take a significant cut, Murphy recommended start looking at your contracts, the real or expected attrition of employees and whether you need to fill the position now or not, and make sure any spending meets the Bona Fide Need rule.

The long and short of the appropriations process is while we still are in the first inning, there is no time to drink a beer and get a hot dog because the inning or two you miss, could leave your program, mission area in a different kind of “S” word storm.