

SMITH MARION & CO.
EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP
SPRING CONNECTION MEETING
MAY 2025

*New
York*

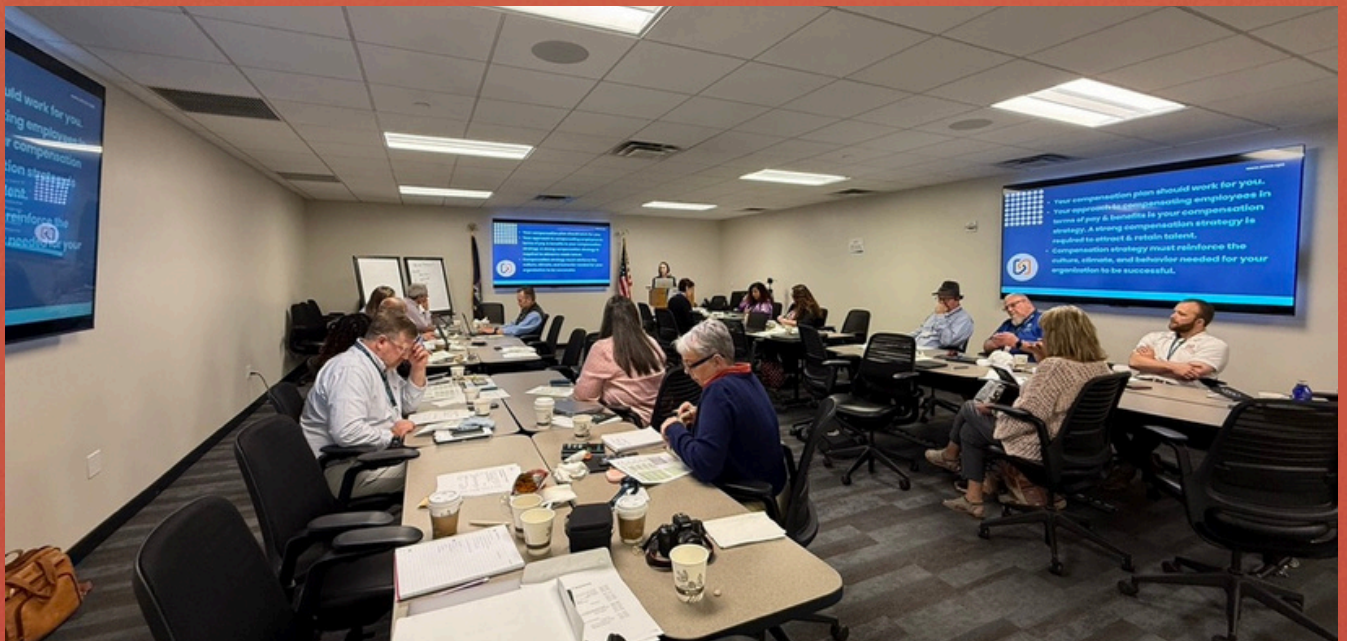


WWW.SMCONNECTION.CPA

CONNECTION: COLLABORATION IN ACTION

The May 2025 Spring Connection meeting brought Housing Authority professionals together in New York for two days of hands-on learning, honest discussions, and fresh insights. Participants shared challenges, celebrated progress, and exchanged tools to improve operations, leadership, and staff development.

This spring's Executive Leadership Connection focused on the balance between strategic vision and everyday pressures, as well as integrating AI, refining internal processes, and preparing for generational leadership shifts.



DISCUSSION TOPICS

Succession & Staff Development -

Our expert-led panel discussion on current housing trends explored both present challenges and emerging issues, including shifts away from traditional HUD funding, advancements in technology, the retirement of executive leadership, and Housing Authorities managing other Housing Authorities. These dynamic conversations provided participants with valuable insights into the future of housing, sparking questions and deep discussions on these evolving industry developments.

Board Management Strategies -

Many agencies are managing challenges related to mayor-driven board turnover. A strong board chair and maintaining good relationships with city councils were identified as vital to maintaining stability. Some organizations have started enforcing attendance rules and setting travel limits through their bylaws to create more structured and effective boards.

AI in Practice -

Agencies are finding value in using ChatGPT or ChatGPTgov for secure AI support and other tools like Otter and Grammarly to aid in communication and efficiency. AI is also being explored for after-hours maintenance work orders and strategic planning efforts. Interestingly, some staff may already be using AI tools unknowingly, as platforms like Microsoft Outlook increasingly include automated features.





Workload & Time Management -

Agencies discussed the need to prioritize accountability and smart delegation. Managers should be trained not just in leadership, but also in managing their teams effectively.

Participants encouraged fostering a work culture where mistakes are seen as learning opportunities, helping staff become more resilient and reliable.

Bond Development Efforts -

Agencies interested in bond financing noted the importance of obtaining a Moody's credit rating and working closely with partners such as KeyBanc Capital Markets and experienced consultants. The process of issuing bonds typically takes two to three months, and thoughtful planning is crucial to success.

Transferring Institutional Knowledge:

Yardi was highlighted as the preferred software for its robust features across business lines, with RealPage and PHA Web as budget-friendly options for smaller Housing Authorities. Outsourcing payroll to services like Paylocity or ADP reduces workload and enables effective tracking for dispersed teams.



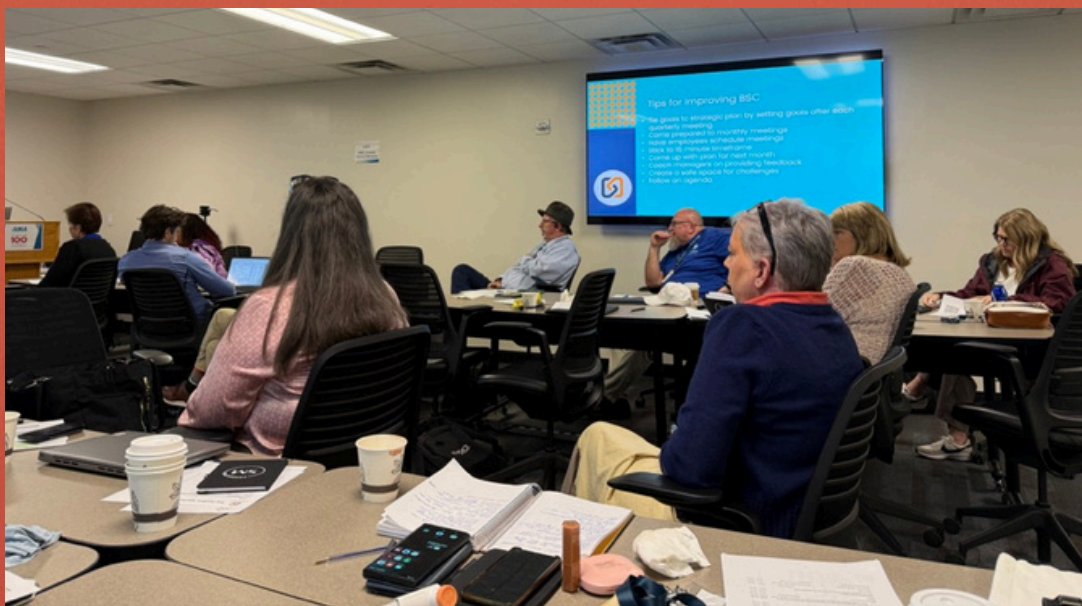
SPONSOR HIGHLIGHTS

BDO -

BDO offers extended remote support, prompt service, and broad expertise through their fee accounting. They emphasized the importance of seeing fee accountants as strategic partners who support agency goals beyond traditional accounting services.

YARDI -

YARDI continues to lead with a focus on community impact, philanthropy, and compliance. They showcased their Voyager 8 platform, which includes a hands-free upgrade, and highlighted the Compliance Manager tool as a user-friendly compliance solution. Aspire supports workforce development through a robust course catalog and modern tools. Their systems, including Voyager 8, were praised for being intuitive and design-focused, offering a smooth learning experience for agency staff.



BALANCE SCORECARD: PANEL DISCUSSION

Insights & Best Practices:

Agencies are increasingly adopting the Balanced Scorecard approach to connect strategic goals with actionable performance metrics. Payout models vary from monthly and quarterly to annual, depending on the agency's structure and goals. BSCs have proven to drive accountability, prevent procrastination, and uncover training needs across all levels of staff.

Key Tips from Peer Agencies:

Agencies recommended tying BSCs to measurable outcomes that align directly with strategic goals. Many integrate BSCs into their hiring processes, typically activating them after a 90-day review period. External facilitators can ease the rollout and increase team buy-in. Agencies also suggested including BSC incentive pay in the budget and salary planning processes. Over time, the complexity and expectations of the BSC can be gradually increased as team members become more acclimated to the system.

"Just do it."

Overcoming fear of imperfection helps agencies move forward.

**LEARN FROM THOSE
WHO ARE WALKING
THE SAME PATH AS
YOU.**



**LOOKING AHEAD: OCTOBER 8-9TH
FALL CONNECTION 2025 SANTA ROSA, CA**

Get ready to help shape the future of Connection! As we prepare for our next gathering, we're diving into conversations around the evolving role of technology in affordable housing, leading multigenerational teams, and strengthening maintenance leadership. Your voice matters. Help steer the agenda by voting on session topics, sharing your insights, and making plans to join us in beautiful Santa Rosa, California. This event is more than a meeting; it's a chance to collaborate, reflect, and lead alongside others who are walking the same path. Let's keep the momentum going and create real change together.

2025 SPRING CONNECTION TESTIMONIALS

"I like the opportunity to learn how other agencies are handling situations. I like how the environment invites honesty and openness.."

"Best use of peer group sharing outside of regulatory."

"Q and A's are my favorite because we get to hear so many different perspectives."

Interested in joining Connection?

Scan the QR code below to set up a 30-minute discovery call

