

Agency Purpose

The Minnesota Higher Education Facilities Authority (hereafter called the Authority) was created by the state legislature in 1971 to assist nonprofit institutions of higher education throughout Minnesota with financing or refinancing capital construction projects by issuing tax-exempt revenue bonds. Beginning in FY 1988, the legislature also asked the Authority to finance limited types of projects at certain public higher education institutions. The Authority serves eligible higher education institutions by allowing them to access lower cost tax-exempt interest rates. The Authority receives no General Fund tax dollars or any other legislative appropriations. The operating funds come from fees charged to the institutions that benefit from tax-exempt bonds.

Core Functions

The Authority operates under a board of ten members, eight of whom are appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate. A representative of the Minnesota Office of Higher Education and the President of the Minnesota Private College Council are the two ex-officio members of the Authority.

The Authority issues tax-exempt revenue obligations and enters into agreements with higher education institutions to be responsible for the use of the loan proceeds and to repay the bondholders. The Authority has no liability to repay the bondholders. The Authority has access to capital improvement funds only through borrowing directly. When a higher education institution needs funds for capital improvements, the Authority is able to provide more favorable interest rates because of its status as a government entity. Since the Authority is an agency of the state, the interest paid by the institution to the bondholders is exempt from both state and federal income taxes.

Core functions support the goal of issuing tax-exempt revenue obligations in an efficient and cost-effective manner for higher education institutions. The core functions are to:

- ◆ develop Authority expertise and educate institutions on financing options;
- ◆ provide analysis and consulting in developing institutional capital financing options; and
- ◆ manage Authority operations without increasing fees.

These functions support ongoing operating goals to:

- ◆ provide a consistent and efficient process for obtaining tax-exempt financing;
- ◆ educate institutions through the application guide, newsletters, and annual educational forum on market, legal, and accounting considerations;
- ◆ provide specific analysis and consulting for institutional capital financing plans; and
- ◆ assist institutions with investor relations, post-closing compliance, and rating agency reviews.

Access to capital improvement funds is essential to the long-term viability of institutions dedicated to educating Minnesota's workforce. Students benefit because lower borrowing costs reduce the pressure to increase tuition costs.

Operations

The Authority operates with the advice and leadership of a board of ten people and a staff of three people. The board meets monthly and acts incrementally on the application for financing and the financing structure of all bond issues. For each bond issue, a law firm is appointed by the Attorney General to serve as bond counsel. A financial advisor firm is retained by the Authority to advise on the financial feasibility and structure of each bond issue.

At A Glance

The Higher Education Facilities Authority assists nonprofit institutions of higher education in financing capital projects through the issuance of tax-exempt debt.

- ◆ The Authority is authorized to have a maximum total of \$800 million outstanding bond principal.
- ◆ In FY 2006, the Authority completed four financings for a total of \$93 million.
- ◆ The total bond principal outstanding at 6/30/2006, was \$644 million.
- ◆ 21 nonprofit, post-secondary institutions in Minnesota have utilized the Authority's program and realized interest savings on financing their capital improvements.

In general, except for payroll administration, the Authority's staff is responsible for all operations relating to the core functions. Staff receives minimal services from other state agencies (other than payroll and legal services). As a result, the Authority's operations have a neutral impact on the state's operating budget and capital budget.

Budget

Operating expenses of the Authority are paid by a fee charged to each participating institution. The Authority receives no General Fund tax dollars or other legislative appropriation. The Department of Finance administers the three-person payroll using dedicated receipts deposited monthly by the Authority.

Contact

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Dollars in Thousands

	Current		Forecast Base		Biennium 2008-09
	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	
<u>Expenditures by Fund</u>					
Statutory Appropriations					
Miscellaneous Agency	240	254	257	264	521
Total	240	254	257	264	521
<u>Expenditures by Category</u>					
Total Compensation	240	254	257	264	521
Total	240	254	257	264	521
<u>Expenditures by Program</u>					
Hgher Educ Fac Authr	240	254	257	264	521
Total	240	254	257	264	521
Full-Time Equivalentents (FTE)	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	

HIGHER ED FACILITIES AUTHORITY

Agency Revenue Summary

Dollars in Thousands

	Actual FY2006	Budgeted FY2007	Current Law		Biennium 2008-09
			FY2008	FY2009	
<i>Non Dedicated Revenue:</i>					
Total Non-Dedicated Receipts	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Dedicated Receipts:</i>					
Other Sources:					
Miscellaneous Agency	235	251	257	264	521
Total Dedicated Receipts	235	251	257	264	521
Agency Total Revenue	235	251	257	264	521