

# GLWA OUTREACH SCORECARD 2022

*Holding steady during a year  
of change and challenge*

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*Prepared by Bridgeport Consulting,  
Third Party Member Outreach Facilitators for GLWA*

*December 14, 2022*

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# Table of Contents

*page*

**3**

*Key Takeaways*

*page*

**4**

*Survey Overview*

*page*

**9**

*Overall Satisfaction*

*page*

**10**

*Strengths*

*page*

**12**

*Data Trends*

*page*

**19**

*Comments*

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# Key Takeaways

## The Top 5 Things You Need to Know

1. Overall satisfaction held strong at **90%**!
2. Many factors dipped slightly from last year; service areas to watch include One Water Institute, CIP Project Delivery, and Field Services.
3. Satisfaction with GLWA's Executive Leadership Team increased slightly – the one service area that trended up.
4. Communication, transparency, and responsiveness are key strengths; pressure issues and CIP cost represent areas of concern.
5. Survey participation continues to decline.

# Survey Overview

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[Background - 5](#)

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[Respondent Demographics - 6](#)

---

[Participation - 7](#)

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# Background

## History & Rating Scale

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*The Scorecard uses a 4-point rating scale:*

*4 ... Very Satisfied/Strongly Agree*

*3 ... Satisfied/Agree*

*2 ... Dissatisfied/Disagree*

*1 ... Very Dissatisfied/Strongly Disagree*

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The original GLWA Member Outreach Scorecard was developed at the recommendation of the Water Management Best Practices Work Group, approved by the One Water Partnership, and deployed by Project Innovations in Fall 2017.

In January 2018, Bridgeport Consulting transitioned into the role of third-party facilitator and designed the 2<sup>nd</sup> iteration of the annual survey in October 2018.

Changes to the Scorecard included a scoring system designed to reflect an individual's actual experience, the ability to score specific factors within a category, and ample room (plus encouragement) to provide qualitative comments.

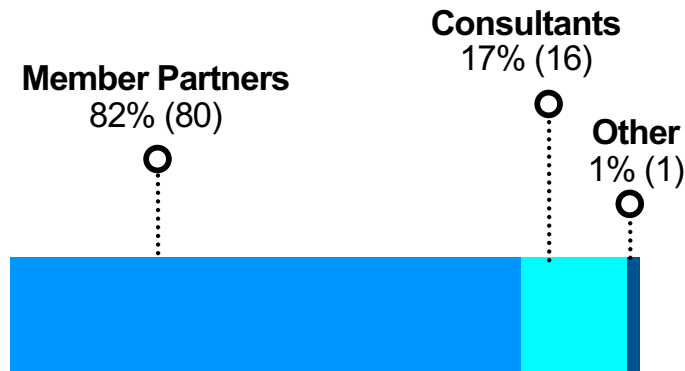
# This Year's Changes

**1. Removed a COVID-specific question** that probed how Member Outreach responded to the circumstances of the pandemic.

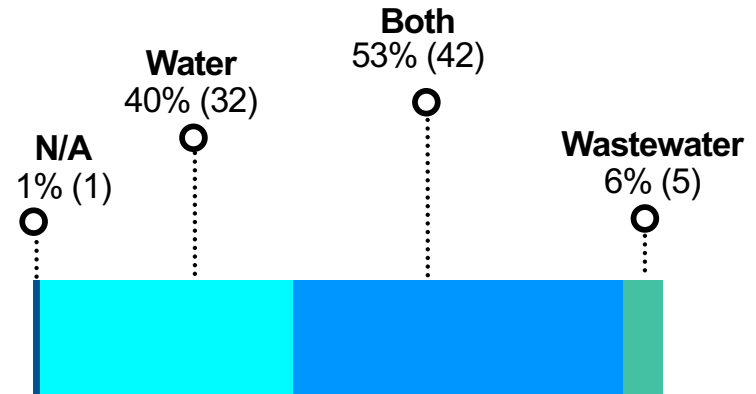
**2. Streamlined demographic data** related to Member Partner roles.

# Respondent Demographics

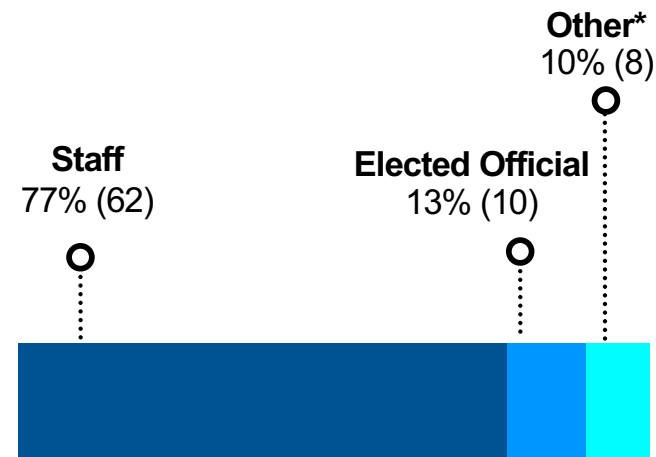
This year's Scorecard experienced an approximately 9% lower response rate than the 2021 Scorecard, a continued decline from earlier years (which averaged around 135 responses). The Scorecard is only deployed to members, not GLWA team members or Directors. Responses to the Scorecard Survey were collected September 29 through October 21, a period of 23 days.



**97 Respondents**



**Member Type**



**Role in Organization**

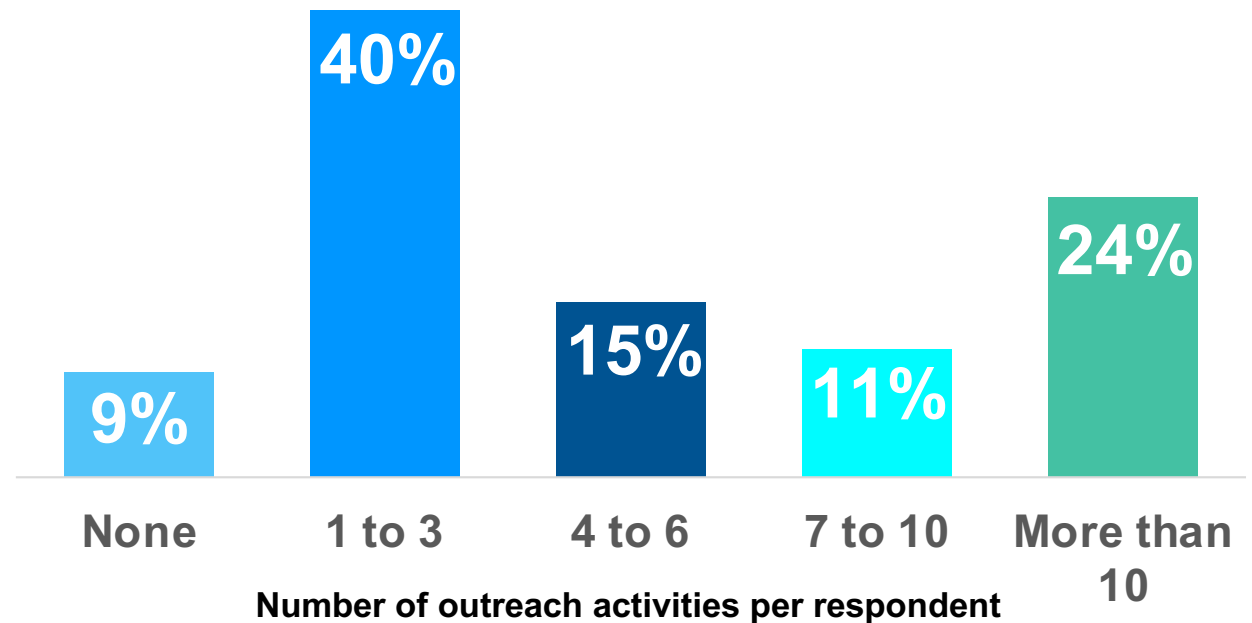
*\*7 of the 8 survey participants who selected "Other" to describe their role identified themselves as supervisors or DPW directors within a Member Community.*

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# Participation

## In Outreach Activities

Eight respondents (9%) did not participate in an outreach activity in 2022. Twenty-one respondents (24%) participated in more than 10 meetings, again highlighting the **wide range of participation levels** with respect to the Outreach Program. The largest percentage of respondents (40%) participated in 1-3 meetings in the past 12 months, followed by the 24% who participated in more than 10 meetings. The increase in the percentage of respondents participating in 10 or more meetings over 2021 levels could be due to the launch of a Charges Methodology Review initiative, in which subgroup members meet two times a month.



# The Results

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[Overall Satisfaction - 9](#)

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[Strengths - 10](#)

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[Data Trends - 11](#)

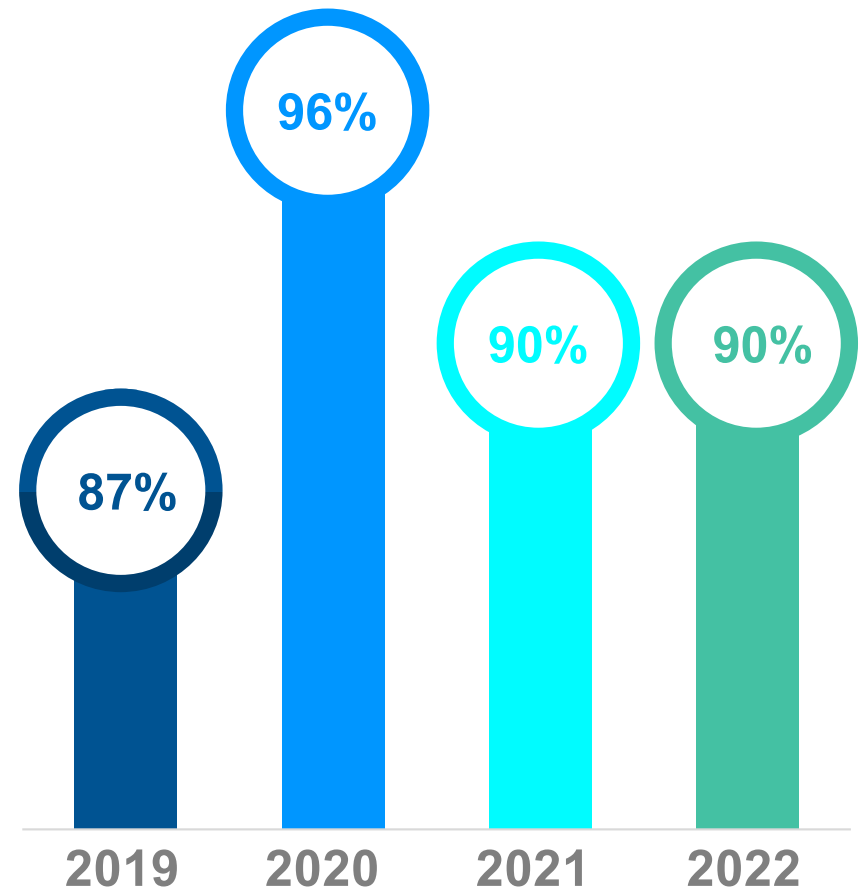
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# Overall Satisfaction

The question regarding overall satisfaction with GLWA aligns with a positive perception. As in 2021, just over **90% of respondents** scored this question positively, selecting either “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied.”

The stability of the overall satisfaction question is notable given the stressors experienced in 2022: several major leadership transitions, including the position of CEO; emergency operations resulting from two transmission main breaks in twelve months; and conflict regarding bad debt.

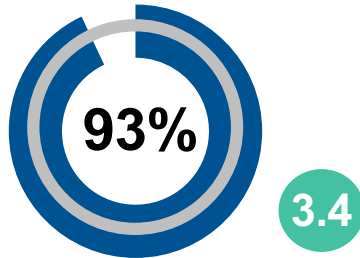


*Margin of error = +/-9%*

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# Strengths

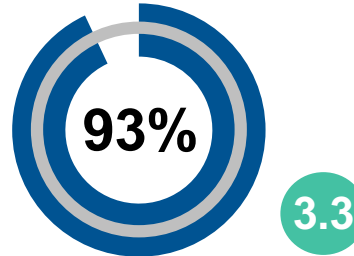
## The Biggest Winners



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Member Outreach Program  
*communication*

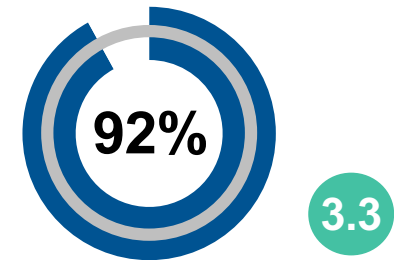
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GLWA communication  
about *emergency issues*

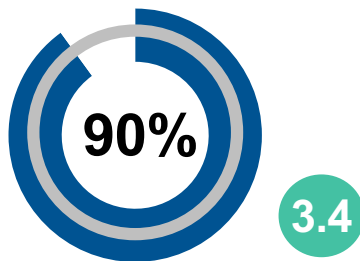
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GLWA Team Members  
are *knowledgeable*

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Member Outreach Program  
meetings *provide valuable information*

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In addition to the overall satisfaction question, four individual factors received **strongly positive ratings**, where the sum of “Strongly Agree” (or “Very Satisfied”) plus “Agree” (or “Satisfied”) exceeded 90% **and** achieved a weighted average of 3.30 out of 4.0.

# Data Trends

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[GLWA Team Members - 12](#)

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[Member Outreach - 13](#)

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[Charges - 13](#)

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[Collaboration - 15](#)

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[Communication - 16](#)

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[GLWA Service Areas - 17](#)

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# Data Trends

## GLWA Team Members

In general, GLWA Team Members I interact with...

Scorecard responses use a 4-point rating scale:

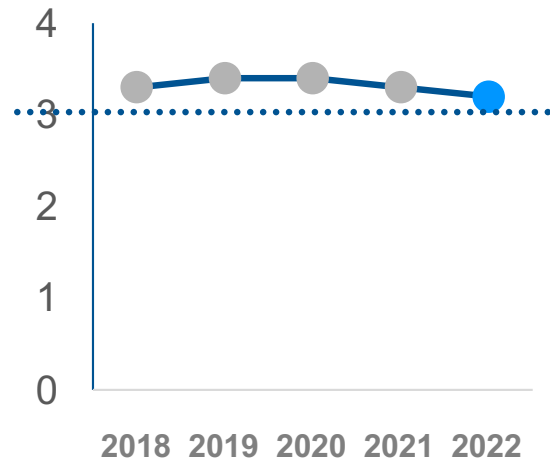
4 ... Very Satisfied/Strongly Agree

3 ... Satisfied/Agree

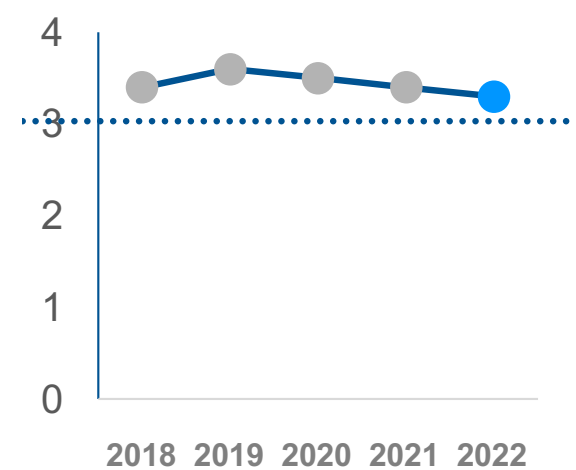
2 ... Dissatisfied/Disagree

1 ... Very Dissatisfied/Strongly Disagree

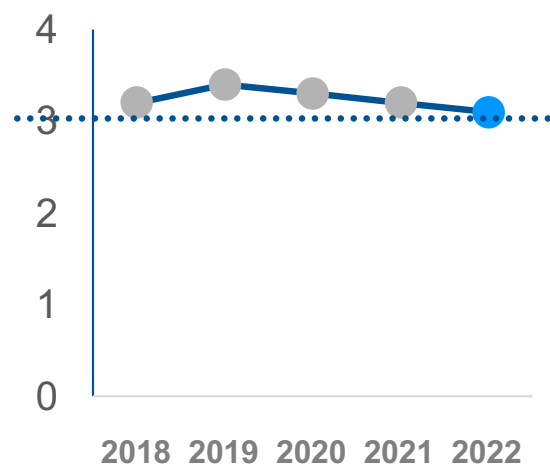
Are responsive to member needs



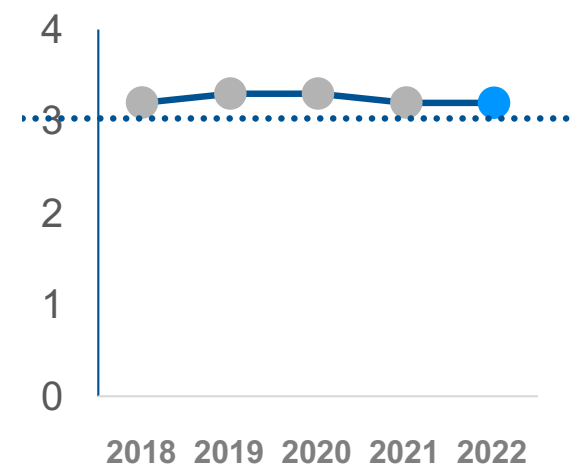
Are knowledgeable



Prioritize effectively



Gets things done

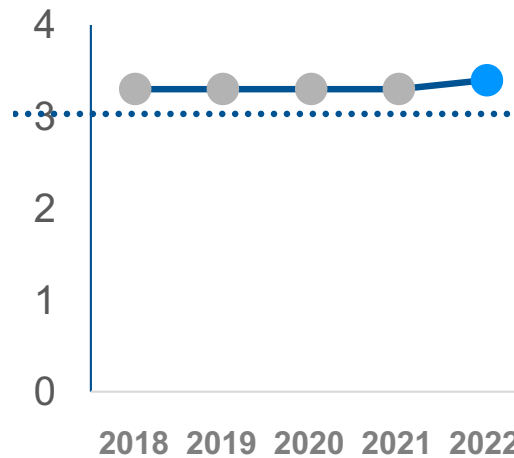


# Data Trends

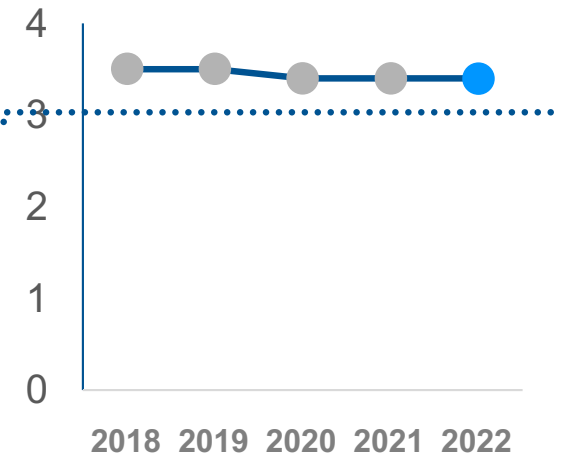
## Member Outreach

In the Member Outreach Program...

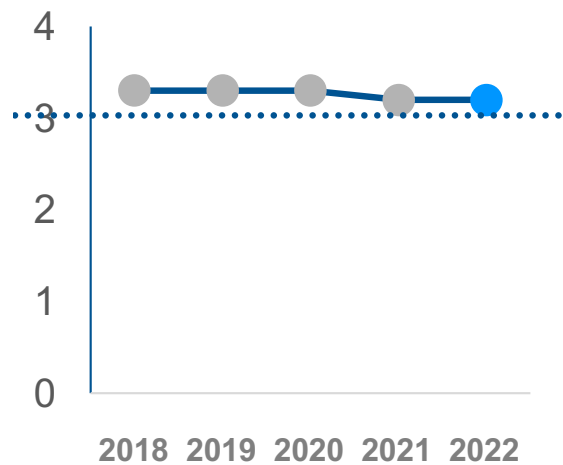
Meetings provide valuable information



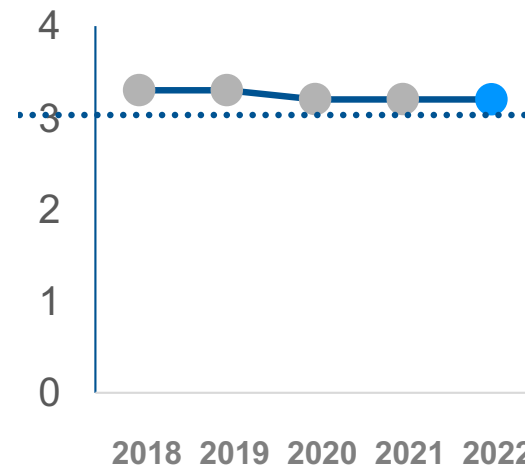
Members have enough opportunities to participate



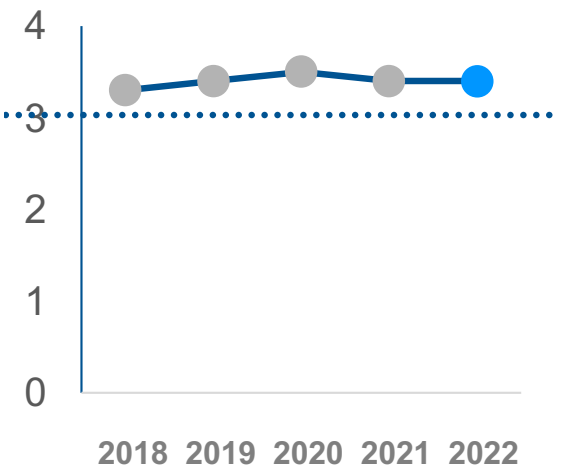
I feel my voice is heard



The One Water Co-Chairs represent the interests of the members



The third-party facilitators (Bridgeport Consulting) engage members effectively

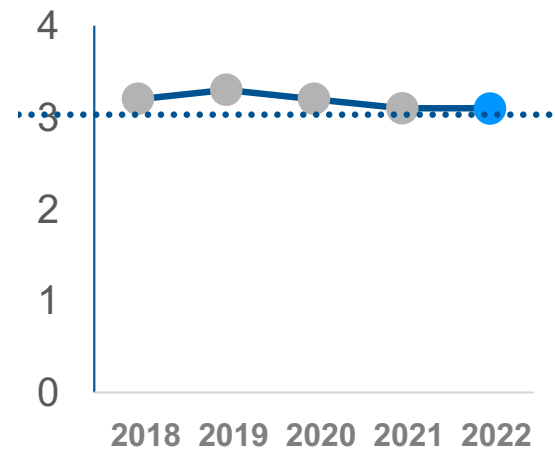


# Data Trends

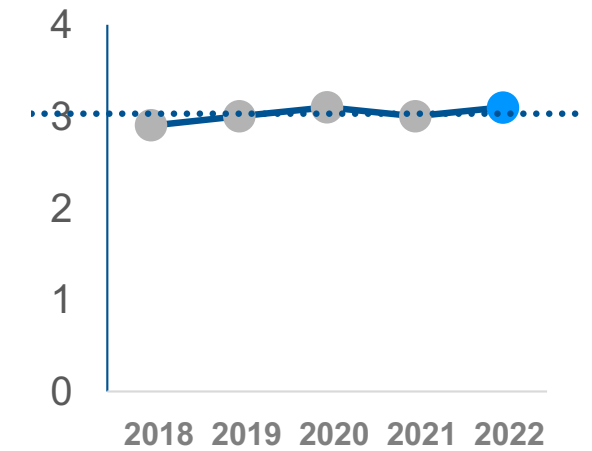
## Charges

Regarding water and wastewater charges...

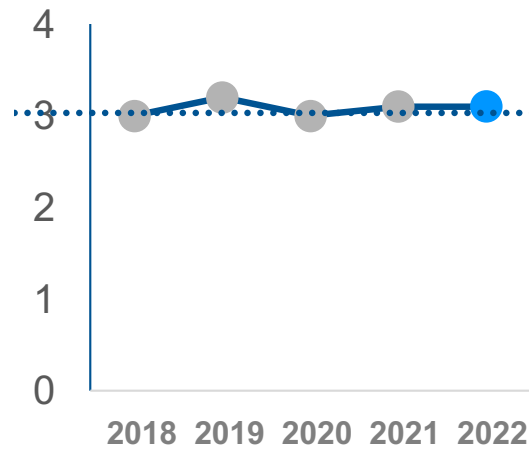
The methodology process includes effective member engagement



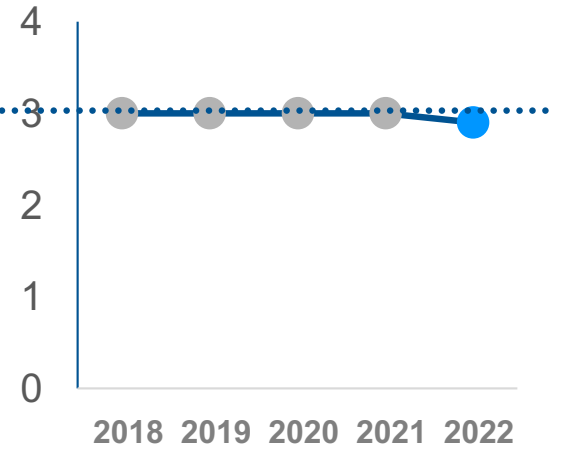
The approval process happens in a timely manner



The methodology aligns with the overall vision for the region



I understand the GLWA charges methodology

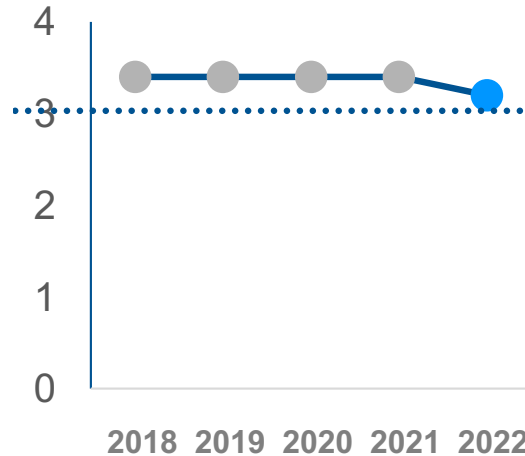


# Data Trends

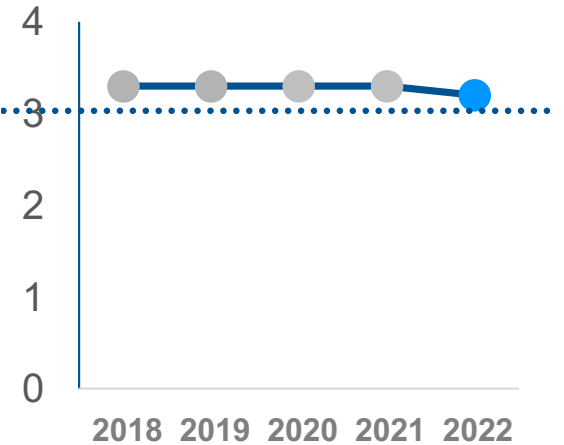
## Collaboration

Regarding GLWA's collaboration efforts...

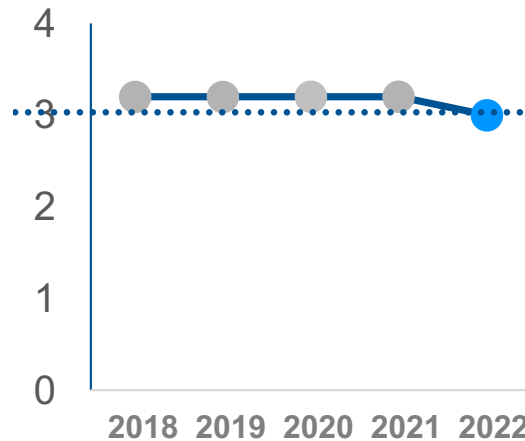
**GLWA provides a good platform for regional collaboration**



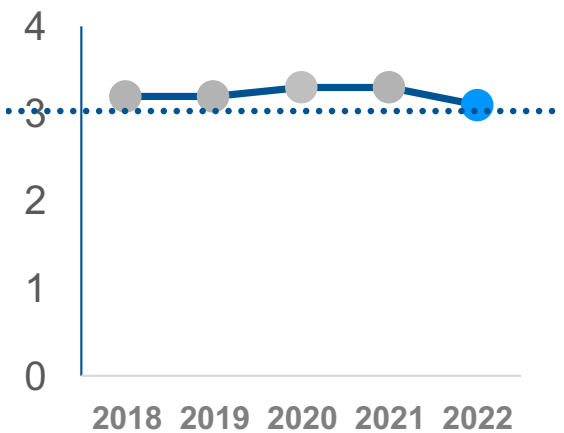
**GLWA members are living up to the Rules of Collaboration**



**GLWA is a valuable resource to my community for joint problem solving and/or leveraging opportunities**



**GLWA is implementing technology innovations that benefit the member communities and the region**

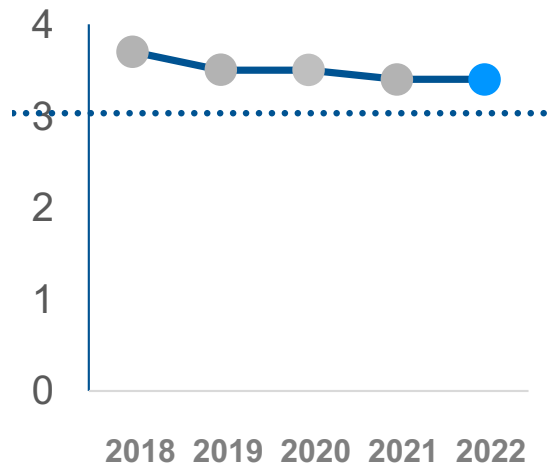


# Data Trends

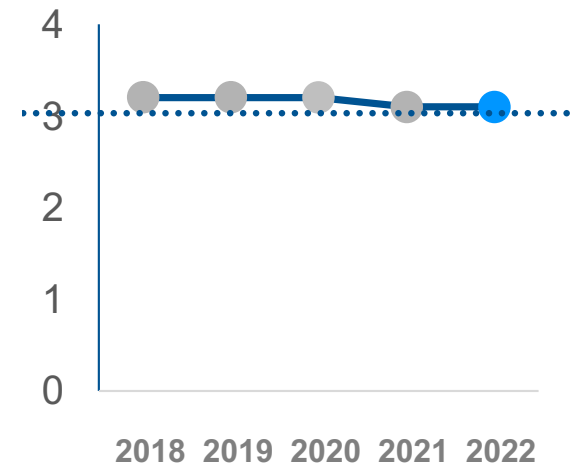
## Communication

Regarding GLWA information and communication efforts...

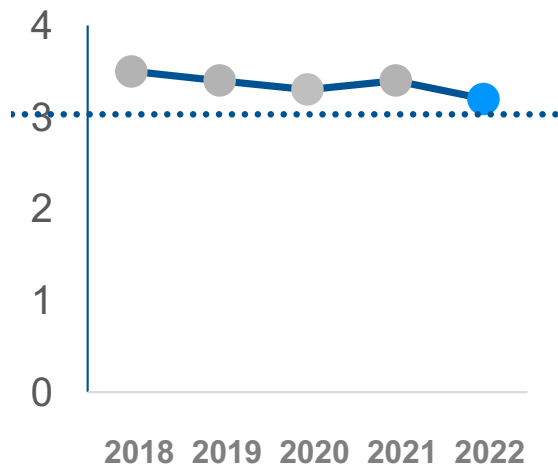
**Member Outreach Program communication (such as meeting notices, summaries)**



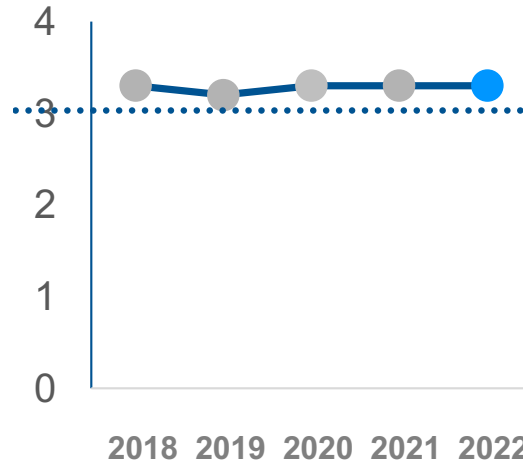
**Greater Regional Sewer System (GDRSS)**



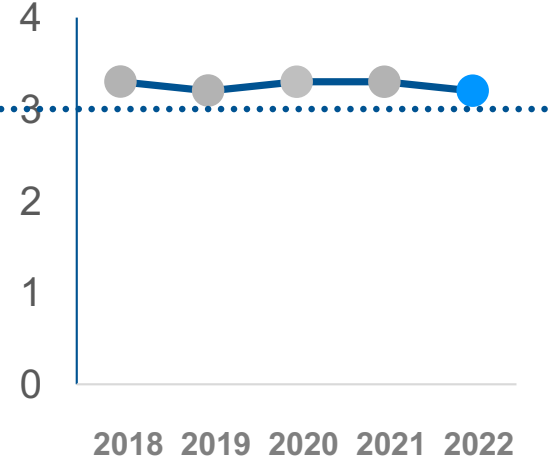
**Wholesale Automated Meter Reading (WAMR)**



**Communication about emergency issues**



**Communication about non-emergency issues**

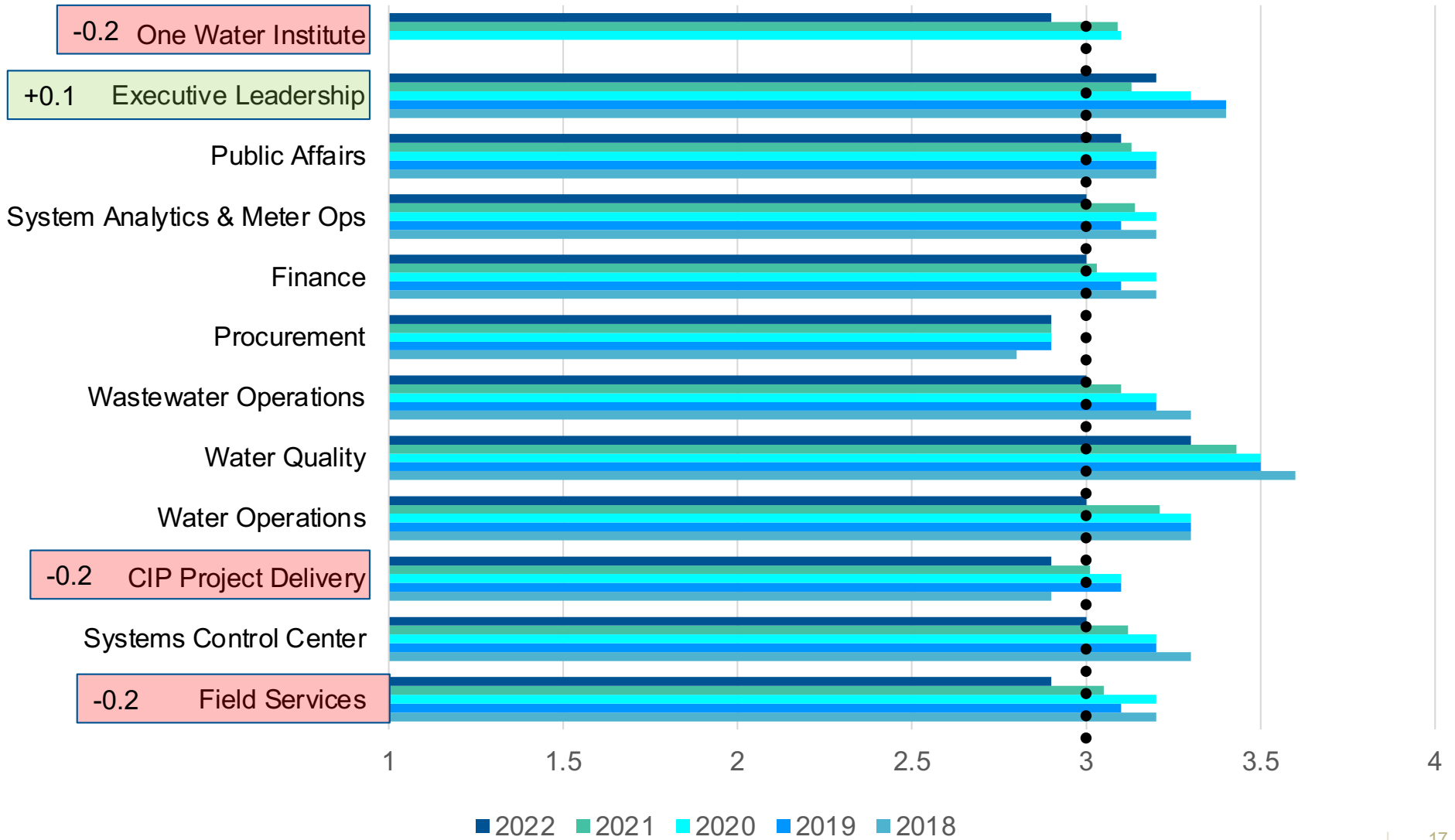




# Data Trends

## GLWA Service Areas

How satisfied are you with the following GLWA service areas...



# Comments

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**After most questions, respondents were invited to elaborate on their responses. All comments provided by respondents have been included verbatim.**

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[Overall Satisfaction - 19](#)

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[GLWA Team Members - 21](#)

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[Member Outreach - 22](#)

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[Charges - 23](#)

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[Collaboration - 24](#)

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[Service Areas - 25](#)

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[Information &  
Communication - 26](#)

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# Comments

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## What is the one factor that most influenced your response [to the overall satisfaction question]?

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*The following comments were provided by respondents who selected “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied.”*

1. Open communication
2. Good, just challenging with 120 water main break
3. Bit worried on getting ahead of the CIP planning.
4. Working with personnel in the last year.
5. The regular Zoom meetings are extremely convenient and informative; better than wasting a day driving to a meeting.
6. Commitment to open communication.

7. Working closely with GLWA on several issues.
8. Wealth of information provided
9. Response to 14 Mile main break
10. Staff leadership
11. Water quality
12. Level of communication and building of trust over the past several years of engagement.
13. Communication
14. Communication with Member Partners
15. Customer outreach, CIP progress, operations
16. Consistent operations (Wastewater), with short turnaround for corrective actions.
17. Well managed
18. Good communication
19. Staff is always responsive to any issues that come up.

20. Very responsive and helpful – my interactions primarily via the outreach consultants, so answer with that bias
21. Quality of drinking water
22. Strong leadership (throughout the authority) to improve water management for the region as a whole.
23. GLWA’s engagement and transparency
24. We do not have any problems with our water service.
25. Your communications are excellent.
26. Transparency
27. The ability and desire to answer phones and work closely with member partners.
28. Their transparency that has developed over the past years.
29. Good communication with member communities.

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# Comments

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## What is the one factor that most influenced your response [to the overall satisfaction question]?

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**30.** Committed to providing reliable water service to customers

**31.** High quality, reliable water supply

**32.** Good communications

**33.** Visible and proactive outreach

**34.** Quality of GLWA presentations at meetings

**35.** Good communication

**36.** Transparency, thoroughness, and responsiveness on matters that concern members the most

**37.** Performance seems to be improving.

**38.** The quality and helpfulness of the employees I get to work with at GLWA.

**4.** Outdated equipment

**5.** Charges to our Township in comparison to neighboring communities. 2-3X higher



*The following comments were provided by respondents who selected "Dissatisfied" or "Very Very Dissatisfied".*

**1.** "Neutral". Pressure issues.

**2.** The rates in Wayne are higher than surrounding communities.

We are still trying to get a reasonable explanation. Also paying Highland parks bill and not receiving refund for previously paid amounts is unacceptable.

**3.** We have received excessive pressures above contract maximum through most of September which resulted in daily water main breaks.

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# Comments

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## GLWA Team Members I interact with...*[see slide 12 for the full text of the question]*

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1. Still waiting on design info for meter GLWA wants to add

2. Concern with flooding last summer and 120" main break this summer that there are competing priorities. The mantra from previous leadership of "faster, faster" can mean everything is a priority and therefore, nothing is a priority. Looking forward to see the new strategic direction of the organization.

3. Responsiveness with inadequate information available or incomplete response. Prioritization continues operations, but focus is on the budget.

4. The large storm event of 2021 revealed that we were perhaps more focused on CSO control vs. stormwater control. I think GLWA has pivot well on that, but continue to balance issue of water in the basements vs. reducing CSOs to zero

5. Some roadblocks encountered when a priority for one group is not a priority for another – but cooperation is needed.

6. GLWA is able to complete large and important projects to provide improved customer service. They respond well to operational issues. They are helpful and responsive when you reach out. Biren Saparia and Todd King have both been great partners on difficult projects. They are knowledgeable and get things done.

7. We have an outdated lifting station in our city - GLWA "doesn't want it". We have leachate from Woodland Meadows entering the sewer system. GLWA is experimenting with drinking water chemicals to coat pipes. That's cuckoo

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# Comments

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## In the Member Outreach Program... ...[see slide 13 for the full text of the question]

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1. Bridgeport is phenomenal, their whole team is.
2. Bridgeport is awesome.
3. Facilitation is excellent – it's engaging and there is a very good grasp of the technical details to manage the discussions appropriately.
4. Bridgeport does a fantastic job
5. Bridgeport Rocks!
6. Please please please choose other topics besides units of service project to discuss at water AWG meetings. I think that GLWA does a lot of interesting and good things that member partners would like to hear about.
7. Would like the AWG to address more issues especially as related to operations such as corrosion control study, system improvements, and plant improvements.
8. The icebreakers are unnecessary; let us get down to business and get it over with.
9. I don't like the ice breakers. I would rather just get to the purpose of the meeting – making it more time efficient.
10. Bridgeport has done a great job of keeping the involvement level up despite the virtual meeting environment
11. Well done.
12. It's an old-fashioned process. The meeting is a boring presentation that normally ends with more questions than information...GLWA needs board members and leaders with a stake in the community not a lifetime of pollution, neglect and hatred of government

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# Comments

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## Regarding water and wastewater charges.....*[see slide 14 for the full text of the question]*

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1. No matter how much I learn about the methodology, it is really hard to be knowledgeable enough to explain it to others.

2. I am a member participant in the water charges committee.

3. The methodology has been brought to a level of understanding.

4. Line items need to be specifically broken down for each community that provides simple math calculations to arrive at final charges. Still vague.

5. The timing does not allow for member communities to communicate properly with its customers in advance of the rate change.

6. My role does not participate in charges methodology or approval process.

7. Ensure that all communities pay their water/wastewater bills and no one gets special treatment or the system will fail.

8. I understand much (most all?) of the charges on the wastewater side, not the water side due primarily not a focus of my consulting

9. The fact we are in the process can be just a check the box for GLWA. If I really disagree not sure it matters. Where else can we go?

10. I let our staff get the information and provide input

11. Haven't been that focused on charges this year.

12. I appreciated how early the charges were completed last year but was disappointed that GLWA was not able to manage the customer reaction to the Highland Park fiasco. GLWA seemed to get everyone excited on this issue but didn't provide a means of using the excitement in a positive way.

13. Still waiting on an explanation

14. The methodology lacks method. GLWA is a nice idea but it presently serves itself and is a victim, like mass Transit, of the secretive secessionist movement of Western Wayne and the cash rich communities that will not yield as they vainly and angrily try to form their own county.

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# Comments

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## Regarding GLWA's collaboration efforts... *[See Slide 15 for full question text]*

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1. I would like to see another way to GLWA to alert member partners of a sampling “outliers” other than to sign up for the full AURA program. A simple email with a bacti sample shows low chlorine residual would suffice. I am disappointed in the amount of time and rush our staff were put through to be a part of the ASTERRA pilot. We were given unclear direction, very short and abrupt timelines then once our portion was fulfilled there has been no movement on the project.

2. GLWA is the largest water utility so their leadership on regional issues is needed and appropriate. Limited experience with the technology innovations but those projects seem to have unclear timing and expectations.

3. GLWA is laying pipe and printing bills. Though acting as a utility it answers to no one. The Michigan Public Services Commission does not regulate it and the present Governor protects it for whatever reason. GLWA is hobbled by the factional behavior of member communities, some who don't even obey state law because they are so rich and others who do not because they are so poor.



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# Comments

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## How satisfied are you with the following GLWA service areas?...[See Slide 17 for all service areas referenced in question]

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1. Procurement takes too long to get contracts out.

2. I haven't used the One Water Institute yet, however, will make an attempt to use it.

3. One Water Institute would be further utilized if directly applicable to water distribution and even sanitary O&M. Too plant heavy.

4. One Water institute just never seems to get going, need better effort to bring it to the wholesale customer base and their staff

5. High marks on procurement and finance as feel GLWA has been proactive on our contract extension and on payments of invoices in a timely manner. As for SAMO, I work for that group, so response possibly reflects that bias. *[Participant is a consultant, not a GLWA team member.]*

6. There were some field activities that we wanted to advance but field services had to prioritize other activities and so we didn't move forward. Might be harsh to give a dissatisfied because of this, but it felt like the best option.

Procurement is a slow process.

7. Water Quality is a difficult task with changing expectations. We appreciate working with that group. It would be nice to have more access to the water quality data. Aura is not as helpful as we all hoped.

8. Response from management personnel is very good.

9. CIP for water is too expensive and GLWA seems resistant to input on that subject.

10. Have a lot of problems in last 2 years with field staff leaving unmetered connections open creating tremendous water loss

11. Though we do get info on emergencies and some info on non emergency issues, our citizens do not understand why we are paying more.

12. I would answer in particulars to all of these items but you restrict me to one text box. Suffice it to say for all these things that GLWA joins the rest of these xenophobic and greedy local governments which are standing in the way of Detroit's growth into the megacity it should be.

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# Comments

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**How satisfied are you with the following GLWA information and communication efforts? ...[See slide 16 for the full text of the question]**

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**1.** I thought the updates on 120" break were very informative. The photos really helped tell the story.

**2.** The WAMR alert system is flawed. When we brought it to their attention, they said our community "does things differently" which is why it doesn't work properly. Not very customer oriented since they require us to use WAMR.

**3.** I love WAMR!

**4.** Emergencies are always difficult. It might be good to review roles during an emergency including issuing boil water notices, etc.

**5.** Though we do get info on emergencies and some info on non emergency issues, our citizens do not understand why we are paying more. *[This comment was repeated from a previous question.]*

**6.** I've got no information from you. I see none on social media or the corporate media. Local government ignores GLWA as GLWA likewise spurns public meetings. My point is made by these disparate means used to disperse information - which - I might add, is incomplete and undependable.