



## **Financial Services Audit Committee Communication**

**Date:** June 6, 2025

**To:** Great Lakes Water Authority Audit Committee

**From:** Nicolette N. Bateson, CPA, Chief Financial Officer & Treasurer

**Re:** CFO Update

### ***Financial Reporting and Accounting Update***

The Great Lakes Water Authority has once again been recognized for its commitment to financial transparency and excellence. For the sixth consecutive year, GLWA has been awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) of the United States and Canada.

The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition for excellence in state and local government financial reporting. It is awarded to entities whose Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) meets the rigorous standards of clarity, organization, and adherence to both generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and applicable legal requirements.

Many groups, areas and teams contributed to winning this award. Leading GLWA's efforts in this area are members of the Financial Reporting and Accounting team: Jill Kusters, CPA, Steve Hoover, CPA, Scott Juryn, CPA, CA, Cindy Cezat, CPA, and Kathy Smith-Roy, CPA.

### ***WRAP Affordability Overview Lunch and Learn***

On March 19, 2025, the Financial Services Area (FSA) hosted its fourth lunch and learn session titled, "WRAP & Affordability Overview" in the 14th Floor Training Room of the Water Board Building. This peer-to-peer lunch and learn series fosters professional development and knowledge sharing within GLWA allowing team members to present relevant information during their lunch break.

FSA Management Professional Haran Stanley led the session and presented an overview of Affordability and Assistance program administration. She also discussed GLWA engagement in regional affordability and assistance efforts, shared FSA roles and responsibilities, and outlined WRAP accounting and reporting requirements.

## ***Michigan Government Finance Officers Association (MGFOA) Spring Seminar***

CFO Services team members Michelle Burt, Regina Washington, Sandy Chen and Gregory Bolterman attended the annual Michigan Government Finance Officers Association (MGFOA) Spring Seminar held in East Lansing, Michigan on March 6, 2025.

The seminar included the core sessions of Legislative Updates, Economic Outlooks and a GASB Audit Update. There were also breakout sessions that allowed attendees to select topics of interest applicable to their work role and opportunities for networking.

While Management Professionals Regina Washington, Sandy Chen and Gregory Bolterman were all first-time attendees, GLWA Billing & Collections Manager Michelle Burt is currently an active member of the MGFOA Membership & Wellness Committee. She also proudly serves as Secretary on the MGFOA's Mentorship Subcommittee.

## ***Charges Update***

Charges Outreach and Modeling Manager, Matt Lane and Management Professional Guy Belew had the opportunity to accompany Chief Financial Officer/ Treasurer Nicolette Bateson, CPA to the Water and Wastewater CFO Forum. This three-day event brought together high-level professionals in water and wastewater utilities from across the country, with the intent of sharing insights and ideas across the sector.

On April 22<sup>nd</sup> and April 24<sup>th</sup>, Matt Lane gave a presentation on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Safe Drinking Water Act at the Michigan American Water Works Association (MI - AWWA) Spring Regional Seminars in Gaylord and Livonia. The presentation celebrates the dedication and progress of water professionals in protecting public health and safety. This seminar also celebrated the Safe Drinking Water Act turning 50 years old in 2024. A celebratory proclamation was signed by Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer and the original document was on display for all attendees to view.

## ***Procurement Update***

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, representatives from the GLWA Procurement Team attended the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Michigan Public Procurement Officers Association (MPPOA) Reverse Trade Fair in Pontiac, Michigan. Procurement representatives from 27 publicly funded agencies, including GLWA, staffed tables providing an opportunity to over 88 vendors seeking to do business with the public sector to meet with numerous agencies in one efficient and centralized location. Throughout the day-long event, GLWA representatives introduced vendors to the fundamentals of GLWA's procurement process, including information on how to submit a successful bid as well as proposal submission to GLWA open opportunities.

In addition, during the event's educational segment for the procurement professionals in attendance, GLWA's Steven Vesschemoet, Management Professional, Procurement, delivered a presentation on GLWA's Vendor Performance Assessment (VPA) Program which formally launched in September 2024. Steven's presentation provided an overview of the

development, implementation, and impact of GLWA's innovative VPA Program which is designed to gather information on a vendor's performance throughout the execution of a contract to improve communication and collaboration between GLWA and our vendor partners.

Also last month, members of the GLWA Procurement Team participated in the third annual Passport to Procurement Conference in Detroit. Over 200 individuals attended the event which was hosted by the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation's BuyDetroit initiative and aimed at connecting Detroit buyers, suppliers, and contractors across industries to new business opportunities.

GLWA participated in the "Meet the Buyers" conference session which provided vendors an opportunity to engage directly with procurement leaders from purchasing teams as well as supplier diversity leaders. Alongside DTE, Henry Ford Health, Comerica Bank, the Huntington Place, the Detroit Zoological Society and others, GLWA staffed a table where vendors could approach to ask questions and share information about their business and capabilities. GLWA procurement representatives connected one-on-one with over 100 vendors to share details about GLWA's procurement process, navigating the Bonfire Procurement Portal, and current and upcoming procurement opportunities.

Finally – save the date! We are excited to share that the 2025 Vendor Outreach Event will be held on September 25, 2025, at Macomb Community College in Macomb County. More information will be forthcoming as the date gets closer.