



Financial Services Operations and Resources Committee

Date: October 15, 2020

To: Great Lakes Water Authority Operations and Resources Committee

From: Jon Wheatley, Public Finance Manager

Re: Water Residential Assistance Program – Discussion of Temporary Program Change Related to Participant Removal Due to COVID-19

Background: Water Residential Assistance Program (“WRAP”) provides sustainable funding for qualifying low-income residents served by the Great Lakes Water Authority’s (“GLWA”) customers. The program is currently funded by GLWA at an amount equal to 0.5 percent of budgeted revenues with the budgeted FY 2021 funding level of \$6.1 million. The program is administered by Wayne Metro Community Action Agency (“Wayne Metro”), a nonprofit agency.

The current program design requires that a participant is removed from WRAP if they do not stay current on their payments. If they are removed from the program they can re-enroll in the program after six months.

Analysis: At the September 25, 2020 GLWA Audit Committee meeting, GLWA staff and representatives from Wayne Metro presented a proposed recommendation to temporarily allow program participants who are unable to make monthly payments on time to remain in the WRAP program provided that participants demonstrate a significant loss of income or inability to make a timely payment due to COVID-19. The temporary period is in alignment with the Governor’s Executive Order (2020-144) which extended the water shut-off moratorium to December 31, 2020. Additionally, participants will still be eligible to receive monthly bill credits and arrears payments if applicable. More details can be found in the included Board letter dated October 15, 2020.

The September 22, 2020 letter from Wayne Metro is included with this memo.

Budget Impact: None.

Proposed Action: The GLWA Operations and Resources Committee recommends that the GLWA Board of Directors approve the Wayne Metro’s recommendation to 1) temporarily allow program participants who are unable to make monthly payments on time to remain in the WRAP program provided that participants demonstrate a significant loss of income or inability to make a timely payment due to COVID-19; and 2) participants will still be eligible to receive monthly bill credits and arrears payments if applicable until December 31, 2020.