



## Financial Services Audit Committee Communication

**Date:** December 18, 2020

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

**From:** Jon Wheatley, Public Finance Manager

**Re:** Water Residential Assistance Program Redesign Implementation Update

**Background:** The Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA) engaged Public Sector Consultants (PSC) to serve as the WRAP Advisor to evaluate the current Water Residential Assistance Program (WRAP). PSC is an objective, nonpartisan research and consulting firm based in Lansing and Detroit. They have been conducting program evaluations for more than 20 years and are well versed in a variety of process and impact evaluation methods, including developing theories of change and logic models, qualitative and quantitative data collection using tools such as focus groups and multimode surveys, in-depth informant interviews, cost-effectiveness analyses, and comprehensive data analyses to yield deep insights and actionable findings.

PSC began work on July 6, 2020 and since that time has completed meetings with GLWA's Chief Financial Officer and Finance staff, Detroit Water and Sewerage Department's (DWSD) Chief Financial Officer and Finance staff, Wayne Metro, GLWA's Chief Executive Officer and DWSD's Director and their General Counsel, individual GLWA Board Members and a focus group for GLWA Member Partners. These meetings, and the feedback gathered, were the basis for PSC's report and recommendations which was presented at the October 23, 2020 Audit Committee meeting and to the GLWA Board on October 28, 2020.

**Analysis:** GLWA extended its engagement with PSC to help support the implementation of the recommended program changes through June 2021. Based on preliminary discussions, it is anticipated that the full implementation of all recommendations may take at least twelve months, depending on the feedback from the community action agencies.

**Update:** Since the presentation of the final report, PSC has worked with the GLWA team to outline the seventeen recommendations from the report, develop an initial priority of the recommendations and to assign the corresponding stakeholders that will be essential to the implementation of each recommendation. This initial list was presented to representatives of Wayne Metro, Macomb County Community Action Agency (MCCAA) and to Oakland Livingston Human Services Agency (OLHSA) at the implementation kick-off meeting on

December 9, 2020. Included with this memo is the updated priority list which reflects the inputs received during the kick-off meeting.

PSC has incorporated the list into its project management software tool to help manage the implementation. The tool helps track the implementation progress based on the percentage completed on outlined tasks for each recommended program change. A screen shot of the project management tool is also included with this memo.

Monthly updates will be provided to the Audit Committee using this tool to share the progress that is being made toward the full implementation of the program changes.

**Next Steps:** GLWA and PSC will be scheduling one-on-one meetings with MCCA and OLHSA to discuss the specific implementation plans for each community action agency and the progress of program changes that have already started. It is anticipated that additional meetings with all the community action agencies will be needed at a more regular cadence, starting after January 1, 2021. The updated meeting schedules will be determined during the one-on-one meetings with each community action agency.

**Budget Impact:** None.

**Proposed Action:** Receive and file this report.