

Legislation Text

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WRAP Program Update

Agenda of: September 22, 2021

Item No.: **2021-343**

Amount: N/A

TO: The Honorable
Board of Directors
Great Lakes Water Authority

FROM: Suzanne R. Coffey, P.E.
Interim Chief Executive Officer
Great Lakes Water Authority

DATE: September 22, 2021

RE: **WRAP Program Update**

MOTION

Upon recommendation of Nicolette Bateson, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer, the Board of Directors (Board) of the Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA), **approve WRAP Program conservation changes effective October 1, 2021 as outlined in the “WRAP Conservation Program Changes” document;** and authorizes the Interim Chief Executive Officer to take such other action as may be necessary to accomplish the intent of this vote.

BACKGROUND

The Water Residential Assistance Program (“WRAP”) provides sustainable funding for qualifying low-income residents served by the Great Lakes Water Authority’s (“GLWA”) member partners. The program is funded by GLWA at an amount equal to 0.5 percent of budgeted revenues for the Regional System and not less than 0.5 percent, but not greater than 1.0 percent of budgeted revenues for the DWSD Local System. The budgeted WRAP funding for FY 2022 is \$6.2 million combined for water and sewer services.

The WRAP funding is used for a) payment assistance, b) water audit and water conservation assistance and c) program administration. By way of administrative policy, presently 80% of the assistance funding is allocated to payment assistance and 20% is allocated to conservation.

In March 2020, GLWA engaged Public Sector Consultants (PSC) to evaluate WRAP through a series of one-on-one meetings and focus groups with various GLWA and WRAP stakeholders. For FY2022, the following objectives have been

identified for the program:

- Codify decentralized program delivery model to expand direct assistance by community action agencies in Macomb and Oakland counties
- Provide flexibility for the community action agencies to administer the program and to leverage other assistance and outreach efforts provided by the agencies
- Recruit nonparticipating member partner communities
- Make WRAP more accessible for residents
- Improve performance reporting, financial monitoring, cost of service, and program effectiveness
- Simplify monthly bill payment process
- Enhance conservation and water repair services
- Leverage other forms of assistance

GLWA and PSC are continuing to take steps to achieve the FY2022 objectives. This Board letter and the attached presentation will provide an update on WRAP program changes and activities.

JUSTIFICATION

This proposal carries forward WRAP program improvements.

As background information, Attachment 1 presents an analysis of Committed vs. Spent - WRAP program dollars spent for the WRAP program.

WRAP Program Updates

- Beginning July 2021, each community action agency is responsible for WRAP program implementation in their communities using the decentralized program delivery model.
- Wayne Metro is working with each agency to transition WRAP reporting. Updated reporting templates have been developed and training sessions have been scheduled to facilitate the transition.
- PSC has conducted a series of meetings with the community action agencies to assess the water conservation program and identify areas for improvement. The results of the study and recommended program changes are detailed in the attached PSC presentation.

BUDGET IMPACT

The recommended changes to the WRAP conservation services will be covered within the budgeted WRAP funding and does not impact the FY2022 budget.

COMMITTEE REVIEW

This matter was reviewed by the Audit Committee at its meeting on August 27, 2021. The Audit Committee unanimously

recommends the GLWA Board approve WRAP Program conservation changes effective October 1, 2021 as outlined in the "WRAP Conservation Program Changes" document.