



Financial Services Audit Committee Communication

Date: May 22, 2026

To: Great Lakes Water Authority Audit Committee

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

Re: CFO Report

GLWA Hosts Annual Water & Wastewater CFO Forum

In May, the Great Lakes Water Authority was proud to host the annual Water & Wastewater CFO Forum. This annual conference provides an opportunity for senior financial leadership within the water and wastewater sector to engage in collaborative and insightful discussion specific to the issues facing the industry. The conference was held at the SEMCOG offices in downtown Detroit and included a tour of Water Works Park and the surrounding area, sessions on Water Affordability, Infrastructure Funding, Artificial Intelligence Industry Impacts, Rating Agency Insights, Regulatory Uncertainty, System Resiliency, Software Implementation Challenges and Cybersecurity Concerns. GLWA Chief Executive Officer Suzanne Coffey opened the event noting GLWA's strength coming from meaningful internal collaboration and how that supports Member Partner service and transparency. Chief Financial Officer & Treasurer, Nicolette Bateson and Finance Director, Scott Garrigan led a panel discussion relating to the efforts of the GLWA Water Funding Task Force.

FSA Team Member Training

On Friday, April 10, 2026, the Financial Services Area team held their Quarterly Training event. The training this quarter focused on a review of the GLWA policy on the use of Artificial Intelligence. The presentation was kicked off with team-member led demonstrations using Microsoft CoPilot and its benefits in the workplace. The event also provided the opportunity to discuss updates across the organization, upcoming training opportunities as well as a reminder of the resources available to all our team members.

Charges and Outreach Continue Contract Reopeners

The GLWA Contract Reopener Team began meeting with Water Member Partners in February. Four months into the process, the team has met with 36 member partners. The process will continue into the Fall, until all contracts have been approved.

Procurement Updates

The Procurement Team focused on several vendor outreach events this past month.

Design Build Institute of America - In April, Sonya Collins and Jeanette Driver attended the Design Build Institute of America (DBIA) Water/Wastewater Conference. The national industry event focused on design build delivery within the water and wastewater sector. The conference brought together public utilities, engineering firms, contractors, and suppliers from across the country. With more than 1,600 attendees and participation from over 150 vendor firms, the event created opportunities to strengthen existing relationships and expand GLWA's vendor network through targeted engagement efforts.

Throughout the conference, Sonya and Jeanette met with construction and engineering firms that have previously conducted business with GLWA, as well as subcontractors and potential new partners unfamiliar with GLWA. These interactions focused on helping vendors better understand upcoming opportunities, qualification requirements, and how to successfully navigate GLWA's procurement process from registration to project delivery. Engagement efforts were intentionally segmented to maximize impact and ensure tailored discussions for each vendor group.

In addition to these one-on-one conversations, GLWA used the conference to gather insights into current industry trends, potential participation barriers, and best practices that may enhance GLWA's solicitation and contracting processes. The conference served as a valuable platform for outreach, information-sharing, and relationship-building. In addition, it strengthened GLWA's presence within the design-build water sector while supporting ongoing efforts to expand the diversity and depth of vendor participation.

Business in the City Event - On April 27, 2026, Michael Lasley and Jeanette Driver attended *Business in the City: Contracting & Supplying Opportunities* hosted by the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation's Buy Detroit Program in partnership with the Detroit Legacy Business Project. The event featured matchmaking sessions where representatives from eight buying organizations were strategically matched with businesses for 10-minute one-on-one meetings. Over 75 businesses in total attended the event. GLWA sat down with six businesses to help them better understand upcoming opportunities, the qualifications required to work with GLWA, and how to navigate our procurement process from start to finish. In addition, the event also featured a panel discussion on Preparing Detroit Businesses for Growth and presentations by the City of Detroit's Civil Rights, Inclusion, & Opportunity Department as well as the Office of Contracting & Procurement.

Michigan Public Purchasing Officers Association Reverse Trade Fair - Also in April, team members Sonya Collins, Michael Lasley, Jeanette Driver, Tina Clinkscales, and Sean Hallock attended the 17th Annual Michigan Public Purchasing Officers Association (MPPOA) Reverse Trade Fair. The event provided vendors, contractors, and consultants with the opportunity to meet with procurement professionals from around the state of Michigan. The event featured procurement representatives from 30 publicly funded agencies and provided over 138 vendors with an efficient and cost-effective way to meet with numerous agencies.

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 or proposal submission to GLWA open opportunities. GLWA welcomed the opportunity to meet with many new and familiar faces from both the Procurement and Vendor communities, and we thank the MPPOA for hosting the event.