

MEMORANDUM

TO: Audit Committee

THROUGH: Chair Tulloch

FROM: Sara Schmitz

SUBJECT: Discuss and potentially request staff to provide more information related to Management's Responses to the 2020-21 Audit Committee recommendations

DATE: May 23, 2022

I. RECOMMENDATION

The Audit Committee discuss Management's responses to the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) to identify and confirm for which items the Audit Committee requests additional documentation to be presented for the June 16 Audit Committee meeting.

II. BACKGROUND

Management provided the attached memorandum in response to the Audit Committee's recommendations to the Board of Trustees. In subsequent discussions, the Audit Committee has indicated a need for further written clarification from Management.

At the request of the Audit Committee this is being brought forth for discussion to identify the items requesting management provide additional, documented clarification.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Trustees

THROUGH: Paul Navazio
Director of Finance

FROM: Indra Winqest
District General Manager

SUBJECT: Management Comments Related to Audit Committee Annual Report (dated March 9, 2022)

DATE: April 13, 2022

I. RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board of Trustees consider management's response(s) to the recommendations included in the Annual Report of the Audit Committee, presented to the Board of Trustees on March 9, 2022, prior to consideration of formal Board action related to the Audit Committee's recommendations.

II. BACKGROUND

The purpose of this memorandum serves to provide management's response to the recommendations presented to the Board of Trustees via the Audit Committee's annual report on the FY2020/21 audit, which was transmitted to the Board on March 9, 2022.

Upon receipt of the Audit Committee's Annual Report, the Board of Trustees deferred action on the specific recommendations being advanced by the Audit Committee, pending review and comment from management (and, where appropriate, the District's external auditor).

This agenda item has been prepared in response to the request from the Board of Trustees.

The Audit Committee's Annual Report, presented to the Board of Trustees at their meeting of March 9, 2022 contained a series of specific recommendations within five general topics, for consideration by the Board.

Staff concurs with recommendations of the Audit Committee related to:

Recommendation #1 - Expanding the scope of audit work for FY21/22 to include enhanced review of internal controls.

Staff has largely implement the recommendation of the Audit Committee related to items to be included in the District's Capital Budget:

Recommendation #5 - the Audit Committee recommends the Capital Improvement budget contain only project costs that are to be capitalized. The Audit Committee recommends that projects or project elements related to preliminary stage activities, repair and maintenance items are separated and included in operating expenses.

In addition, related to Recommendation #4, staff concurs with updating the historical methodology for allocating interest earnings; however, staff wishes to clarify that a change in methodology for allocating investment earnings was implemented for FY2021/22. This revised approach is consistent with best management practices. Staff feels that the Audit Committee's recommendation, as presented in their Annual Report, is based on a misunderstanding of the how investment earnings were allocated in the past, as well as the change in methodology that has been implemented in the current fiscal year.

Staff does not concur with the Audit Committee's recommendations related to the need for additional prior period adjustments. Each of these items were reviewed by the District's external auditors (past and/or present), and the most recent audit of the District's financial statements were determined by the independent auditor to be "fairly represented in all material respects." Therefore, a review and revision of items already audited and deemed appropriate by both management and the District's independent auditor is unwarranted and unnecessary. These Audit Committee recommendations include:

Recommendation #2 - The Audit Committee recommends a prior period adjustment to expense items 2a & 2b for consistency and accuracy of our financial statements. (Related to maintenance and repair activities).

Recommendation #3 - The Audit Committee recommends a prior year adjustment to expense these items for compliance with Board Practice and consistency and accuracy of our financial statements. (Application of capitalization threshold criteria).

Recommendation #4 - The Audit Committee recommends a prior period adjustment removing investment income credited to the General Fund and included in the fund balances for the fund(s) which had cash invested at LGIP, as it had historically been done, prior to FY 2018-2019.

III. DISCUSSION

This discussion sections provides more specific responses to each of the recommendations included in the Audit Committee's Annual Report to the Board of Trustees, dated March 9, 2022. The Audit Committee's recommendations are presented herein, verbatim, and *management's responses are presented in italics.*

1. The Audit Committee notes actions are being taken by management to address the identified issues in the Auditors Compliance Report related to Internal Controls and Construction Projects.

The Audit Committee recommends that the FY 21-22 audit be expanded in scope to include enhanced review of internal controls.

Management Response:

Management concurs that the scope of the independent audit engagement did not constitute a "comprehensive forensic audit," nor is this typically the scope of an annual audit of financial statements.

Should the Board choose to undertake an audit that goes beyond the standard audit procedures for review of financial statements for compliance with GAAP/GAASB and Generally-Accepted Audit Standards, this should be discussed with the external auditor. Additional audit scope would likely require a separate engagement (and cost) from the specific scope of the annual financial statement audit, for which the District has entered into a multi-year, fixed-price contract.

2. Management corrected prior years of capitalization for items considered to be maintenance and repairs. However, the FY 2019-2020 and 2020-21 ACFRs are inconsistent.
 - a. For the Utility Fund, this is estimated to be \$181,882 (see Comments and Concerns #2 and Section 3.1)
 - b. For Community Services the amount is estimated to be \$1,171,606 (see Concern 11, Section 3.3, and Appendix D). These were for preliminary stage activities which include conceptual formulation and evaluation of alternatives, determination of future needs, feasibility studies and development of financing alternatives, temporary repairs for the Burnt Cedar pool and temporary repairs at the Mountain Golf Course Clubhouse.
 - c. Similar costs were expensed for 2019-2020 (as a prior period adjustment - Note 22 of CAFR) for the Parks Master Plan (\$212,044) and the Incline Village Ballfield (\$77,216). In FY 2020-2021 similar costs of \$3,100,110 for the Effluent Pipeline were charged off as a prior period adjustment. This highlights the inconsistency of the financial statements.

The Audit Committee recommends a prior period adjustment to expense items 2a & 2b for consistency and accuracy of our financial statements.

Management Response:

All FY2020/21 capital and construction-in-process items were reviewed by management and the auditor and concluded that capitalization was appropriate.

3. Contained in the initial draft of the ACFR, the Auditor had identified an additional \$866,503.70 of charge off to expenses items for items capitalized in past CAFRs. After review by Management, some items were removed including levee and roadway repairs at the wetlands, spot paving at various recreational venues, sewer line repairs and roof repairs which, as noted in #2 above, had been determined to be expense items rather than capital.

Additionally, equipment items were grouped together to meet the capitalization threshold while Board Practice 2.9 states “**In no case will the District establish a capitalization threshold of less than \$5,000 for any individual item.**”. The Audit Committee Chair reviewed this with the Auditor, after the financial report was complete, and she concurred that the Board Practice is clear and not open to interpretation. In addition, an Audit Committee member reviewed with Melissa Crosthwaite, District Legal Counsel, who also concurred the statement is clear. (see Concern 8 and Section 3.2)

The Audit Committee recommends a prior year adjustment to expense these items for compliance with Board Practice and consistency and accuracy of our financial statements.

Management Response:

As discussed with the Audit Committee, and supported by the Auditor, at issue are items that the Auditor had identified as potential write-offs, based on their review of Board Policy and GAAP/GASB guidelines. The reversals of items initially written-off were all reviewed with the Auditor and were only reversed upon concurrence of the Auditor.

Moreover, management believes that the review of capital assets and subsequent write-offs to be consistent with Board Policy 9.1 and Board Practice 9.2. At the same time, given the identified need to clarify aspects of the capitalization policy, these have been largely addressed in the updated capitalization policy approved by the Board in January.

Staff notes that in following up with both the external auditor and the District’s legal counsel, the comments attributed to both in this Audit Committee recommendation

are taken out of context and should not be viewed as concurrence with the Audit Committee's position.

4. Beginning in FY 2018-2019 investment income was credited to the General Fund instead of other funds which had cash deposits at LGIP. This caused the General Fund's opening balance in the FY 2020-21 ACFR to be overstated by approximately \$492K (over a 10% overstatement). This has not been corrected.

The new process management has chosen to implement is allocating investment income not by the fund with cash invested at LGIP, but based on total cash equivalents by fund.

The Audit Committee recommends a prior period adjustment removing investment income credited to the General Fund and included in the fund balances for the fund(s) which had cash invested at LGIP, as it had historically been done, prior to FY 2018-2019.

Additionally, the committee recommends the approach for distribution of investment income be based solely on cash invested by fund or to have separate LGIP accounts by fund, like the Utility Fund, to avoid any confusion.

Management Response:

The accounting for investment income has been modified beginning with the 2021/22 (current) fiscal year. This change in methodology is consistent with best management practices and, staff believes, is more closely aligned with the implied goal of the Audit Committee's recommendation.

Staff does not concur with the Audit Committee's recommendation to record prior period adjustments related to past practice of allocating investment earnings.

Simply stated, the District's past practice was to record and track investments in LGIP and the District's investment portfolio "by fund." Accordingly, individual funds were credited with investment earnings based on the interest received by investments held by each individual fund. Under this approach, the General Fund was historically credited with interest earnings from pooled cash within the District's governmental funds.

Beginning July 1, 2021, management modified the methodology for allocating investment earnings. Consistent with best management practices, all available cash on hand is pooled for investment purposes. Individual investments are not recorded, or tracked, by fund, but rather investments are managed under a pooled portfolio, with interest earnings allocated to each of the District's individual funds based on each fund's proportional share of cash balances available for investment.

5. For ease of transparency, and to align with best practices, **the Audit Committee recommends the Capital Improvement budget contain only project costs that are to be capitalized. The Audit Committee recommends that projects or project elements related to preliminary stage activities, repair and maintenance items are separated and included in operating expenses. A separate line item in the Statement of Income, Revenue and Expenses and Change in Net Position for preliminary stage activities, repairs and maintenance is recommended for all funds.** This will allow for cross referencing the expense items budgeted within Services and Supplies.

Management Response:

Management does not concur with the full extent of this recommendation, and this issue warrants Board discussion.

Management concurs, and has implemented, budgeting and accounting practice of reflecting all capital maintenance expenses as operating costs within the District's budget and financial statements. Specifically, items to be capitalized are budgeted as capital outlay within the District's budget, and items that are deemed capital maintenance and repairs (or otherwise do not meet the District's capitalization criteria) are budgeted and accounted for within each fund's operating budget.

However, the presentation of these items within the District's overall multi-year capital plan is not only consistent with current Board Policy 13.1/ Practice 13.2, but also assists in identifying individual projects, with varying levels of funding requirements, all related to the maintenance and replacement of the districts, facilities, infrastructure, and assets.

Notwithstanding, management is developing improved presentation and reporting of the different elements contained in the capital plan for improved transparency and ease of understanding.

Lastly, management does not concur with the recommendation to reflect all of the maintenance and repair items in a separate line item within the District's financial statements (specifically, Statement of Income, Expense and Change in Net Position). While these items are presently reflected in a single account object code (7505) within the budget and general ledgers, these items are more appropriately reflected in the account codes appropriate for the "type" of expenditure (example: computer equipment, professional services, etc.). Moreover, establishing a separate line item within the District's formal financial statements, as recommended by the Audit Committee, is contrary to GAAP/GASP requirements for these type of expenditures.

(Note: In the context of this discussion, it is important to clarify that, with the transition to Enterprise Fund accounting for the District's Community Services and Beach funds, there is no longer any formal distinction between utility and venue "operating budgets" and "capital budgets." All of the revenues and expenditures for each fund are reflected in a single fund (or sub-fund) budget that includes operating, capital and debt line items).

III. ALTERNATIVES

This report recommends that the Board of Trustees consider management's response to each of the Audit Committee's Annual Report recommendations prior to considering formal Board action.

As an alternative to considering each recommendation individually prior to any Board action, the Board could consider:

- 1) Accepting all of the recommendations in the Audit Committee's Annual Report, as recommended by the Audit Committee, or
- 2) Take no action on the recommendations contained within the report, and consider receiving the report and directing the Audit Committee to return to the Board of Trustees with a specific recommendation related to scope and cost of additional audit work to expand the external auditor's review of the District's internal controls.