



OFFICE OF AUDITOR OF STATE
STATE OF IOWA

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Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0006

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Rob Sand
Auditor of State

NEWS RELEASE

FOR RELEASE

May 12, 2021

Contact: Marlys Gaston
515/281-5834

Auditor of State Rob Sand today released an audit report on the Great River Regional Waste Authority.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS:

The Authority had total receipts of \$3,436,369 for the year ended June 30, 2020, a 6.7% increase over the prior year, primarily due to increased solid waste tonnage taken in during fiscal year 2020. Disbursements for the year ended June 30, 2020 totaled \$3,397,958, an 8.1% increase over the prior year. The increase in disbursements is primarily due to capital outlay for land purchase to expand the landfill.

AUDIT FINDINGS:

Sand reported eight findings related to the receipt and disbursement of taxpayer funds. They are found on pages 28 through 34 of this report. The findings address issues such as a lack of segregation of duties, receipt and disbursement posting errors, the lack of procedures to reconcile customer billings, collections and delinquent accounts and month end bank reconciliations which do not incorporate all the Authority's bank and investment accounts. Sand provided the Authority with recommendations to address each of the findings.

Five of the eight findings discussed above are repeated from the prior year. The Authority has a fiduciary responsibility to provide oversight of the Landfill's operations and financial transactions. Oversight is typically defined as the "watchful and responsible care" a governing body exercises in its fiduciary capacity.

A copy of the audit report is available for review on the Auditor of State's web site at <https://auditor.iowa.gov/audit-reports>.

###

GREAT RIVER REGIONAL WASTE AUTHORITY

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORTS
BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENT
AND OTHER INFORMATION
SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS**

JUNE 30, 2020

Great River Regional Waste Authority



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Rob Sand
Auditor of State

April 9, 2021

Officials of the Great River Regional Waste Authority
Fort Madison, Iowa

Dear Board Members:

I am pleased to submit to you the financial and compliance audit report for the Great River Regional Waste Authority for the year ended June 30, 2020. The audit was performed pursuant to Chapter 11.6 of the Code of Iowa and in accordance with U.S. auditing standards and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards.

I appreciate the cooperation and courtesy extended by the officials and employees of the Great River Regional Waste Authority throughout the audit. If I or this office can be of any further assistance, please contact me or my staff at 515-281-5834.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rob Sand".

Rob Sand
Auditor of State

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Great River Regional Waste Authority

Officials

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Brad Randolph	Chairperson	City of Fort Madison
Gary Adam	Vice Chairperson	Van Buren County
Roger Bryant	Member	City of Keokuk
Rick Larkin	Member	Lee County
Mark Linden	Member	Henry County
Wade Hamm	General Manager	
Colleen Schlabaugh	Business Manager	



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Independent Auditor's Report

To the Members of the Great River Regional Waste Authority:

Report on the Financial Statement

We have audited the accompanying financial statement of the Great River Regional Waste Authority as of and for the year ended June 30, 2020, and the related Notes to Financial Statement.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statement

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statement in accordance with the cash basis of accounting described in Note 1. This includes determining the cash basis of accounting is an acceptable basis for the preparation of the financial statement in the circumstances. This includes the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of a financial statement that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial statement based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with U.S. generally accepted auditing standards and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statement is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statement. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statement, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Authority's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statement in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Authority's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statement.

We believe the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statement referred to above presents fairly, in all material respects, the cash basis financial position of the Great River Regional Waste Authority as of June 30, 2020, and the changes in its cash basis financial position for the year then ended in accordance with the basis of accounting described in Note 1.

Basis of Accounting

As described in Note 1, the financial statement was prepared on the basis of cash receipts and disbursements, which is a basis of accounting other than U.S. generally accepted accounting principles. Our opinion is not modified with respect to this matter.

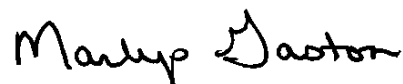
Other Matters

Other Information

The other information, the Schedule of the Authority's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability and the Schedule of the Authority's Contributions on pages 20 through 25, has not been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statement and, accordingly, we do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on it.

Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards

In accordance with Government Auditing Standards, we have also issued our report dated April 9, 2021 on our consideration of the Great River Regional Waste Authority's internal control over financial reporting and our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of that report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the Authority's internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with Government Auditing Standards in considering the Great River Regional Waste Authority's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.



Marlys K. Gaston, CPA
Deputy Auditor of State

April 9, 2021

Great River Regional Waste Authority

Basic Financial Statement

Great River Regional Waste Authority

Great River Regional Waste Authority

Statement of Cash Receipts, Disbursements and
Changes in Cash Balance

As of and for the year ended June 30, 2020

Operating receipts:	
Solid waste fees	\$ 2,576,728
Construction and demolition waste fees	204,998
Wood waste sales	19,121
Integrated waste services support fees	243,048
Recycling sales	111,919
Miscellaneous	<u>150,152</u>
Total operating receipts	<u>3,305,966</u>
Operating disbursements:	
Salaries and benefits	1,008,989
Hauling and freight	211,142
Fuel and lubricants	104,623
Equipment repair and maintenance	386,436
Consulting, legal and audit	227,361
Office equipment and supplies	63,660
Utilities	37,174
Building and grounds	78,778
Landfill road maintenance	43,360
Insurance	29,506
Hazardous material disposal	14,267
Wood waste processing	28,232
Leachate disposal and testing	18,481
Iowa Department of Natural Resources tonnage fee	166,231
Miscellaneous	<u>184,279</u>
Total operating disbursements	<u>2,602,519</u>
Excess of operating receipts over operating disbursements	<u>703,447</u>
Non-operating receipts (disbursements):	
Interest on investments	130,403
Capital outlay	<u>(795,439)</u>
Net non-operating receipts (disbursements)	<u>(665,036)</u>
Change in cash balance	38,411
Cash balance beginning of year	<u>9,658,960</u>
Cash balance end of year	<u>\$ 9,697,371</u>
Cash Basis Fund Balance	
Restricted for:	
Closure	\$ 2,407,579
Postclosure care	1,212,421
Capital expansion	698,730
Solid waste fees	<u>330,871</u>
Total restricted cash basis fund balance	4,649,601
Unrestricted	<u>5,047,770</u>
Total cash basis fund balance	<u>\$ 9,697,371</u>

See notes to financial statements.

Great River Regional Waste Authority

Notes to Financial Statement

June 30, 2020

(1) Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

The Great River Regional Waste Authority was formed in 1988 pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 28E of the Code of Iowa. The purpose of the Authority is to develop, operate and maintain solid waste disposal and resource recovery facilities in Lee and Henry Counties on behalf of the units of government which are members of the Authority.

The governing body of the Authority is composed of one representative from each member. The members of the Authority include Lee County, Henry County, Van Buren County and the cities of Fort Madison and Keokuk. Each member of the Authority has one vote.

A. Reporting Entity

For financial reporting purposes, the Great River Regional Waste Authority has included all funds, organizations, agencies, boards, commissions and authorities. The Authority has also considered all potential component units for which it is financially accountable and other organizations for which the nature and significance of their relationship with the Authority are such that exclusion would cause the Authority's financial statement to be misleading or incomplete. The Governmental Accounting Standards Board has set forth criteria to be considered in determining financial accountability. These criteria include appointing a voting majority of an organization's governing body and (1) the ability of the Authority to impose its will on that organization or (2) the potential for the organization to provide specific benefits to or impose specific financial burdens on the Authority. The Authority has no component units which meet the Governmental Accounting Standards Board criteria.

B. Basis of Presentation

The accounts of the Authority are organized as an Enterprise Fund. Enterprise Funds are utilized to finance and account for the acquisition, operation and maintenance of governmental facilities and services supported by user charges.

Enterprise Funds distinguish operating receipts and disbursements from non-operating items. Operating receipts and disbursements generally result from providing services and producing and delivering goods in connection with an Enterprise Fund's principal ongoing operations. All receipts and disbursements not meeting this definition are reported as non-operating receipts and disbursements.

C. Basis of Accounting

The Authority maintains its financial records on the basis of cash receipts and disbursements and the financial statement of the Authority is prepared on that basis. The cash basis of accounting does not give effect to accounts receivable, accounts payable and accrued items, including the estimated payables for closure and postclosure care. Accordingly, the financial statement does not present the financial position and results of operations of the Authority in accordance with U. S. generally accepted accounting principles.

D. Cash Basis Fund Balance

Funds set aside for payment of closure and postclosure care, capital expansion and solid waste tonnage fees are classified as restricted.

(2) Cash and Investments

The Authority's deposits in banks at June 30, 2020 were entirely covered by federal depository insurance or by the State Sinking Fund in accordance with Chapter 12C of the Code of Iowa. This chapter provides for additional assessments against the depositories to ensure there will be no loss of public funds.

The Authority is authorized by statute to invest public funds in obligations of the United States government, its agencies and instrumentalities; certificates of deposit or other evidences of deposit at federally insured depository institutions approved by the Authority; prime eligible bankers acceptances; certain high rated commercial paper; perfected repurchase agreements; certain registered open-end management investment companies; certain joint investment trusts; and warrants or improvement certificates of a drainage district.

The Authority had no investments meeting the disclosure requirements of Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 72.

(3) Pension Plan

Plan Description – IPERS membership is mandatory for employees of the Authority, except for those covered by another retirement system. Employees of the Authority are provided with pensions through a cost-sharing multiple employer defined benefit pension plan administered by the Iowa Public Employees' Retirement System (IPERS). IPERS issues a stand-alone financial report which is available to the public by mail at PO Box 9117, Des Moines, Iowa 50306-9117 or at www.ipers.org.

IPERS benefits are established under Iowa Code Chapter 97B and the administrative rules thereunder. Chapter 97B and the administrative rules are the official plan documents. The following brief description is provided for general informational purposes only. Refer to the plan documents for more information.

Pension Benefits – A Regular member may retire at normal retirement age and receive monthly benefits without an early-retirement reduction. Normal retirement age is age 65, any time after reaching age 62 with 20 or more years of covered employment or when the member's years of service plus the member's age at the last birthday equals or exceeds 88, whichever comes first. These qualifications must be met on the member's first month of entitlement to benefits. Members cannot begin receiving retirement benefits before age 55. The formula used to calculate a Regular member's monthly IPERS benefit includes:

- A multiplier based on years of service.
- The member's highest five-year average salary, except members with service before June 30, 2012 will use the highest three-year average salary as of that date if it is greater than the highest five-year average salary.

If a member retires before normal retirement age, the member's monthly retirement benefit will be permanently reduced by an early-retirement reduction. The early-retirement reduction is calculated differently for service earned before and after July 1, 2012. For service earned before July 1, 2012, the reduction is 0.25% for each month the member receives benefits before the member's earliest normal retirement age. For service earned on or after July 1, 2012, the reduction is 0.50% for each month the member receives benefits before age 65.

Generally, once a member selects a benefit option, a monthly benefit is calculated and remains the same for the rest of the member's lifetime. However, to combat the effects of inflation, retirees who began receiving benefits prior to July 1990 receive a guaranteed dividend with their regular November benefit payments.

Disability and Death Benefits – A vested member who is awarded federal Social Security disability or Railroad Retirement disability benefits is eligible to claim IPERS benefits regardless of age. Disability benefits are not reduced for early retirement. If a member dies before retirement, the member's beneficiary will receive a lifetime annuity or a lump-sum payment equal to the present actuarial value of the member's accrued benefit or calculated with a set formula, whichever is greater. When a member dies after retirement, death benefits depend on the benefit option the member selected at retirement.

Contributions – Contribution rates are established by IPERS following the annual actuarial valuation which applies IPERS' Contribution Rate Funding Policy and Actuarial Amortization Method. State statute limits the amount rates can increase or decrease each year to 1 percentage point. IPERS Contribution Rate Funding Policy requires the actuarial contribution rate be determined using the "entry age normal" actuarial cost method and the actuarial assumptions and methods approved by the IPERS Investment Board. The actuarial contribution rate covers normal cost plus the unfunded actuarial liability payment based on a 30-year amortization period. The payment to amortize the unfunded actuarial liability is determined as a level percentage of payroll based on the Actuarial Amortization Method adopted by the Investment Board.

In fiscal year 2020, pursuant to the required rate, Regular members contributed 6.29% of covered payroll and the Authority contributed 9.44% of covered payroll, for a total rate of 15.73%.

The Authority's contributions to IPERS for the year ended June 30, 2020 totaled \$67,274.

Net Pension Liability, Pension Expense, Deferred Outflows of Resources and Deferred Inflows of Resources Related to Pensions – At June 30, 2020, the Authority had a liability of \$513,404 for its proportionate share of the net pension liability. The net pension liability was measured as of June 30, 2019 and the total pension liability used to calculate the net pension liability was determined by an actuarial valuation as of that date. The Authority's proportion of the net pension liability was based on the Authority's share of contributions to IPERS relative to the contributions of all IPERS participating employers. At June 30, 2019, the Authority's proportion was 0.008807%, which was a decrease of 0.000022% from its proportion measured as of June 30, 2018.

For the year ended June 30, 2020, the Authority's pension expense, deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources totaled \$94,441, \$80,686 and \$100,584, respectively.

There were no non-employer contributing entities to IPERS.

Actuarial Assumptions – The total pension liability in the June 30, 2019 actuarial valuation was determined using the following actuarial assumptions, applied to all periods included in the measurement.

Rate of inflation (effective June 30, 2017)	2.60% per annum.
Rates of salary increase (effective June 30, 2017)	3.25 to 16.25% average, including inflation. Rates vary by membership group.
Long-term investment rate of return (effective June 30, 2017)	7.00% compounded annually, net of investment expense, including inflation.
Wage growth (effective June 30, 2017)	3.25% per annum, based on 2.60% inflation and 0.65% real wage inflation.

The actuarial assumptions used in the June 30, 2019 valuation were based on the results of an economic assumption study dated March 24, 2017 and a demographic assumption study dated June 28, 2018.

Mortality rates used in the 2019 valuation were based on the RP-2014 Employee and Healthy Annuitant Tables with MP-2017 generational adjustments.

The long-term expected rate of return on IPERS' investments was determined using a building-block method in which best-estimate ranges of expected future real rates (expected returns, net of investment expense and inflation) are developed for each major asset class. These ranges are combined to produce the long-term expected rate of return by weighting the expected future real rates of return by the target asset allocation percentage and by adding expected inflation. The target allocation and best estimates of arithmetic real rates of return for each major asset class are summarized in the following table:

Asset Class	Asset Allocation	Long-Term Expected Real Rate of Return
Domestic equity	22.0%	5.60%
International equity	15.0	6.08
Global smart beta equity	3.0	5.82
Core plus fixed income	27.0	1.71
Public credit	3.5	3.32
Public real assets	7.0	2.81
Cash	1.0	(0.21)
Private equity	11.0	10.13
Private real assets	7.5	4.76
Private credit	3.0	3.01
Total	<u>100.0%</u>	

Discount Rate – The discount rate used to measure the total pension liability was 7.00%. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumed employee contributions will be made at the contractually required rate and contributions from the Authority will be made at contractually required rates, actuarially determined. Based on those assumptions, IPERS' fiduciary net position was projected to be available to make all projected future benefit payments to current active and inactive employees. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on IPERS' investments was applied to all periods of projected benefit payments to determine the total pension liability.

Sensitivity of the Authority's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability to Changes in the Discount Rate – The following presents the Authority's proportionate share of the net pension liability calculated using the discount rate of 7.00%, as well as what the Authority's proportionate share of the net pension liability would be if it were calculated using a discount rate 1% lower (6.00%) or 1% higher (8.00%) than the current rate.

	1% Decrease (6.00%)	Discount Rate (7.00%)	1% Increase (8.00%)
Authority's proportionate share of the net pension liability	\$ 911,640	513,404	179,368

IPERS' Fiduciary Net Position – Detailed information about IPERS' fiduciary net position is available in the separately issued IPERS financial report which is available on IPERS' website at www.ipers.org.

(4) Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB)

Plan Description – The Authority operates a single-employer benefit plan which provides medical, prescription drug and dental benefits for employees, retirees and their spouses. Group insurance benefits are established under Iowa Code Chapter 509A.13. The Authority currently finances the benefit plan on a pay-as-you-go basis. For the year ended June 30, 2020, the Authority contributed \$185,313 and plan members eligible for benefits contributed \$24,872 to the plan. No assets are accumulated in a trust that meets the criteria in paragraph 4 of GASB Statement No. 75.

OPEB Benefits – Individuals who are employed by Great River Regional Waste Authority and are eligible to participate in the group health plan are eligible to continue healthcare benefits upon retirement. Retirees under age 65 pay the same premium for the medical and prescription drug benefits as active employees, which results in an implicit rate subsidy.

Retired participants must be age 55 or older at retirement. At June 30, 2020, 12 active and no inactive employees were covered by the benefit terms:

(5) Closure and Postclosure Care

To comply with federal and state regulations, the Authority is required to complete a monitoring system plan and a closure/postclosure plan and to provide funding necessary to effect closure and postclosure, including the proper monitoring and care of the landfill after closure. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requirements have established closure and thirty-year care requirements for all municipal solid waste landfills which receive waste after October 9, 1993. State governments are primarily responsible for implementation and enforcement of those requirements and have been given flexibility to tailor requirements to accommodate local conditions that exist. The effect of the EPA requirement is to commit landfill owners to perform certain closing functions and postclosure monitoring functions as a condition for the right to operate the landfill in the current period. The EPA requirements provide when a landfill stops accepting waste, it must be covered with a minimum of twenty-four inches of earth to keep liquid away from the buried waste. Once the landfill is closed, the owner is responsible for maintaining the final cover, monitoring ground water and methane gas, and collecting and treating leachate (the liquid that drains out of waste) for thirty years.

Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 18 requires landfill owners to estimate total landfill closure and postclosure care costs and recognize a portion of these costs each year based on the percentage of estimated total landfill capacity used that year. Estimated total costs consist of four components: (1) the cost of equipment and facilities used in postclosure monitoring and care, (2) the cost of final cover (material and labor), (3) the cost of monitoring the landfill during the postclosure period and (4) the cost of any environmental cleanup required after closure. Estimated total cost is based on the cost to purchase those services and equipment currently and is required to be updated annually due to the potential for changes due to inflation or deflation, technology, or applicable laws or regulations.

These costs, including transfer station closure care, for the Authority have been estimated to be \$3,480,205 for closure and \$1,256,061 for postclosure care, for a total of \$4,736,266 as of June 30, 2020. The estimated remaining life of the landfill is 36 years, with approximately 87% of the landfill's capacity used at June 30, 2020. The Authority has established closure and postclosure care accounts to accumulate resources to fund these costs and the closure costs associated with the transfer station discussed in Note 6.

Chapter 455B.306(9)(b) of the Code of Iowa requires permit holders of municipal solid waste landfills to maintain separate closure and postclosure care accounts to accumulate resources for the payment of closure and postclosure care costs. The Authority has begun to accumulate resources to fund these costs and, at June 30, 2020, assets of \$3,620,000 are restricted for these purposes, of which \$2,407,579 is for closure and \$1,212,421 is for postclosure care. They are reported as restricted cash balance in the Statement of Cash Receipts, Disbursements and Changes in Cash Balance.

Also, pursuant to Chapter 567-113.14 of the Iowa Administrative Code (IAC), since the estimated closure and postclosure care costs are not fully funded, the Authority is required to demonstrate financial assurance for the unfunded costs. The Authority has adopted the local government financial test and the local government dedicated fund financial assurance mechanisms. Under this mechanism, the Authority must certify the following to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources:

- The fund is dedicated by local government statute as a reserve fund.
- Payments into the fund are made annually over a pay-in period of ten years or the permitted life of the landfill, whichever is shorter.
- Annual deposits to the fund are determined by the following formula:

$$NP = \frac{CE - CB}{Y}$$

NP = next payment

CE = total required financial assurance

CB = current balance of the fund

Y = number years remaining in the pay-in period

Chapter 567-113.14(8) of the IAC allows a government to choose the dedicated fund mechanism to demonstrate financial assurance and use the accounts established to satisfy the closure and postclosure care account requirements. Accordingly, the Authority is not required to establish closure and postclosure accounts in addition to the accounts established to comply with the dedicated fund financial assurance mechanism.

(6) Transfer Station Closure Care

To comply with state regulations, the Authority is required to complete a closure plan detailing how the transfer station will comply with proper disposal of all solid waste and litter at the site, cleaning the transfer station building, including the rinsing of all surfaces which have come in contact with solid waste or washwater, cleaning of all solid waste transport vehicles that will remain on site, including the rinsing of all surfaces which have come in contact with solid waste, and the removal and proper management of all washwater in the washwater management system.

To comply with state regulations, the Authority is required to maintain a closure account as financial assurance for the closure care costs. The effect of the state requirement is to commit landfill owners to perform certain closing functions as a condition for the right to operate the transfer station in the current period.

The total closure care costs for the Authority for the transfer station as of June 30, 2020 have been estimated at \$11,823. These costs are fully funded at June 30, 2020. The costs and the assets restricted are included in the Note 5 amounts.

(7) Risk Management

The Authority is a member of the Iowa Communities Assurance Pool, as allowed by Chapter 670.7 of the Code of Iowa. The Iowa Communities Assurance Pool (Pool) is a local government risk-sharing pool whose 779 members include various governmental entities throughout the State of Iowa. The Pool was formed in August 1986 for the purpose of managing and funding third-party liability claims against its members. The Pool provides coverage and protection in the following categories: general liability, automobile liability, automobile physical damage, public officials liability, police professional liability, property, inland marine, and boiler/machinery. There have been no reductions in insurance coverage from prior years.

Each member's annual casualty contributions to the Pool fund current operations and provide capital. Annual casualty operating contributions are those amounts necessary to fund, on a cash basis, the Pool's general and administrative expenses, claims, claims expenses and reinsurance expenses estimated for the fiscal year, plus all or any portion of any deficiency in capital. Capital contributions are made during the first six years of membership and are maintained at a level determined by the Board not to exceed 300% of basis rate.

The Pool also provides property coverage. Members who elect such coverage make annual property operating contributions which are necessary to fund, on a cash basis, the Pool's general and administrative expenses, reinsurance premiums, losses and loss expenses for property risks estimated for the fiscal year, plus all or any portion of any deficiency in capital. Any year-end operating surplus is transferred to capital. Deficiencies in operations are offset by transfers from capital and, if insufficient, by the subsequent year's member contributions.

The Authority's property and casualty contributions to the Pool are recorded as disbursements from its operating funds at the time of payment to the Pool. The Authority's contributions to the Pool for the year ended June 30, 2020 were \$52,799.

The Pool uses reinsurance and excess risk-sharing agreements to reduce its exposure to large losses. The Pool retains general, automobile, police professional, and public officials' liability risks up to \$500,000 per claim. Claims exceeding \$500,000 are reinsured through reinsurance and excess risk-sharing agreements up to the amount of risk-sharing protection provided by the Authority's risk-sharing certificate. Property and automobile physical damage risks are retained by the Pool up to \$250,000 each occurrence, each location. Property risks exceeding \$250,000 are reinsured through reinsurance and excess risk-sharing agreements up to the amount of risk-sharing protection provided by the Authority's risk-sharing certificate.

The Pool's intergovernmental contract with its members provides that in the event a casualty claim, property loss or series of claims or losses exceeds the amount of risk-sharing protection provided by the Authority's risk-sharing certificate, or in the event a casualty claim, property loss or series of claims or losses exhausts the Pool's funds and any excess risk-sharing recoveries, then payment of such claims or losses shall be the obligation of the respective individual member against whom the claim was made or the loss was incurred.

Members agree to continue membership in the Pool for a period of not less than one full year. After such period, a member who has given 60 days' prior written notice may withdraw from the Pool. Upon withdrawal, payments for all casualty claims and claims expenses become the sole responsibility of the withdrawing member, regardless of whether a claim was incurred or reported prior to the member's withdrawal. Upon withdrawal, a formula set forth in the Pool's intergovernmental contract with its members is applied to determine the amount (if any) to be refunded to the withdrawing member.

The Authority also carries commercial insurance purchased from other insurers for coverage associated with workers compensation and employee blanket bond in the amount of \$1,000,000 and \$25,000, respectively. The Authority assumes liability for any deductibles, and claims in excess of coverage limitations. Settled claims resulting from these risks have not exceeded commercial insurance coverage in any of the past three fiscal years.

(8) Solid Waste Tonnage Fees Retained

The Authority has established an account for restricting and using solid waste tonnage fees retained by the Authority in accordance with Chapter 455B.310 of the Code of Iowa. At June 30, 2020, the unspent amount retained by the Authority and restricted for the required purpose totaled \$330,871.

(9) Compensated Absences

Authority employees accumulate a limited amount of earned but unused vacation hours for subsequent use or for payment upon termination, retirement or death. The Authority will pay up to \$2,000 of accumulated sick leave upon voluntary resignation or retirement. These accumulations are not recognized as disbursements by the Authority until used or paid. The Authority's approximate liability for earned vacation at June 30, 2020 was \$71,000. This liability has been computed based on rates of pay in effect at June 30, 2020.

(10) Employee Health Insurance Plan

The Authority self-funds a portion of health insurance deductibles for its employees. The plan is funded by Authority contributions and is administered by Employee Benefit Systems (EBS) under an agreement which is subject to automatic renewal. The Authority self funds up to \$1,500 per individual or \$3,000 per family, with employees contributing the first \$750 and \$1,500, respectively. Administrative service fees and premiums are paid monthly from the Authority's operating funds to a separate account administered by EBS. During the year ended June 30, 2020, the Authority paid \$24,872 to the account. The activity in this account is recorded in the Authority's financial statement and the account balance of \$65,699 at June 30, 2020 is included in unrestricted cash basis fund balance.

(11) COVID-19

In March 2020, the COVID-19 outbreak was declared a global pandemic. The disruption to businesses across a range of industries in the United States continues to evolve. The full impact to local, regional and national economies, including the Great River Waste Authority, remains uncertain.

To date, the outbreak has not created a material disruption to the operations of the Waste Authority. However, the extent of the financial impact of COVID-19 will depend on future developments, including the spread of the virus, duration and timing of the economic recovery. Due to these uncertainties, management cannot reasonably estimate the potential impact to the Great River Waste Authority's operations and finances.

Other Information

Great River Regional Waste Authority

Schedule of the Authority's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability

Iowa Public Employees' Retirement System
For the Last Six Years*

Other Information

	2020	2019	2018	2017
Authority's proportion of the net pension liability	0.008807%	0.008829%	0.008411%	0.008270%
Authority's proportionate share of the net pension liability	\$ 513,404	558,551	560,293	515,768
Authority's covered payroll	\$ 674,742	663,381	627,856	588,138
Authority's proportionate share of the net pension liability as a percentage of its covered payroll	76.09%	84.20%	89.24%	87.70%
IPERS' net position as a percentage of the total pension liability	85.45%	83.62%	82.21%	81.82%

* In accordance with GASB Statement No. 68, the amounts presented for each fiscal year were determined as of June 30 of the preceding fiscal year.

See accompanying independent auditor's report.

<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
0.008178%	0.008092%
406,551	327,470
563,758	540,310
72.11%	60.61%
85.19%	87.61%

Great River Regional Waste Authority

Schedule of Authority Contributions

Iowa Public Employees' Retirement System
For the Last Ten Years

Other Information

	2020	2019	2018	2017
Statutorily required contribution	\$ 67,274	63,696	59,240	56,068
Contributions in relation to the statutorily required contribution	(67,274)	(63,696)	(59,240)	(56,068)
Contribution deficiency (excess)	\$ -	-	-	-
Authority's covered payroll	\$ 712,643	674,742	663,381	627,856
Contributions as a percentage of covered payroll	9.44%	9.44%	8.93%	8.93%

See accompanying independent auditor's report.

2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
52,521	50,344	48,250	43,080	41,221	32,675
(52,521)	(50,344)	(48,250)	(43,080)	(41,221)	(32,675)
-	-	-	-	-	-
588,138	563,758	540,310	496,886	510,793	470,144
8.93%	8.93%	8.93%	8.67%	8.07%	6.95%

Great River Regional Waste Authority

Great River Regional Waste Authority
Notes to Other Information – Pension Liability
Year ended June 30, 2020

Changes of benefit terms:

There are no significant changes in benefit terms.

Changes of assumptions:

The 2018 valuation implemented the following refinements as a result of a demographic assumption study dated June 28, 2018:

- Changed mortality assumptions to the RP-2014 mortality tables with mortality improvements modeled using Scale MP-2017.
- Adjusted retirement rates.
- Lowered disability rates.
- Adjusted the probability of a vested Regular member electing to receive a deferred benefit.
- Adjusted the merit component of the salary increase assumption.

The 2017 valuation implemented the following refinements as a result of an experience study dated March 24, 2017:

- Decreased the inflation assumption from 3.00% to 2.60%.
- Decreased the assumed rate of interest on member accounts from 3.75% to 3.50% per year.
- Decreased the discount rate from 7.50% to 7.00%.
- Decreased the wage growth assumption from 4.00% to 3.25%.
- Decreased the payroll growth assumption from 4.00% to 3.25%.

The 2014 valuation implemented the following refinements as a result of a quadrennial experience study:

- Decreased the inflation assumption from 3.25% to 3.00%.
- Decreased the assumed rate of interest on member accounts from 4.00% to 3.75% per year.
- Adjusted male mortality rates for retirees in the Regular membership group.
- Moved from an open 30-year amortization period to a closed 30-year amortization period for the UAL (unfunded actuarial liability) beginning June 30, 2014. Each year thereafter, changes in the UAL from plan experience will be amortized on a separate closed 20-year period.



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Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control
over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters
Based on an Audit of a Financial Statement Performed in Accordance with
Government Auditing Standards

To the Members of the Great River Regional Waste Authority:

We have audited in accordance with U.S. generally accepted auditing standards and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, the financial statement of the Great River Regional Waste Authority as of and for the year ended June 30, 2020, and the related Notes to Financial Statement, and have issued our report thereon dated April 9, 2021. Our report expressed an unmodified opinion on the financial statement which was prepared on the basis of cash receipts and disbursements, a basis of accounting other than U.S. generally accepted accounting principles.

Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statement, we considered the Great River Regional Waste Authority's internal control over financial reporting to determine the audit procedures appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statement, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Great River Regional Waste Authority's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the Great River Regional Waste Authority's internal control.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the preceding paragraph and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies and, therefore, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that have not been identified. However, as described in the accompanying Schedule of Findings, we identified certain deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses and significant deficiencies.

A deficiency in internal control exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent or detect and correct misstatements on a timely basis. A material weakness is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control such that there is a reasonable possibility a material misstatement of the Great River Regional Waste Authority's financial statement will not be prevented or detected and corrected on a timely basis. We consider the deficiencies described in the accompanying Schedule of findings as items (A) through (D) to be material weaknesses.

A significant deficiency is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control which is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance. We consider the deficiency described in the accompanying Schedule of Findings as item (E) to be a significant deficiency.

Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Great River Regional Waste Authority's financial statement is free of material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements, non-compliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit and, accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of non-compliance or other matters that are required to be reported under Government Auditing Standards. However, we noted certain immaterial instances of non-compliance or other matters which are described in the accompanying Schedule of Findings.

Comments involving statutory and other legal matters about the Authority's operations for the year ended June 30, 2020 are based exclusively on knowledge obtained from procedures performed during our audit of the financial statement of the Authority. Since our audit was based on tests and samples, not all transactions that might have had an impact on the comments were necessarily audited. The comments involving statutory and other legal matters are not intended to constitute legal interpretations of those statutes.

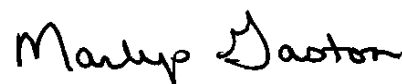
The Great River Regional Waste Authority's Responses to the Findings

The Great River Regional Waste Authority's responses to the findings identified in our audit are described in the accompanying Schedule of Findings. The Great River Regional Waste Authority's responses were not subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statement and, accordingly, we express no opinion on them.

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the results of that testing and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the Authority's internal control or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with Government Auditing Standards in considering the Authority's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.

We would like to acknowledge the many courtesies and assistance extended to us by personnel of the Great River Regional Waste Authority during the course of our audit. Should you have any questions concerning any of the above matters, we shall be pleased to discuss them with you at your convenience.



Marlys K. Gaston, CPA
Deputy Auditor of State

April 9, 2021

Great River Regional Waste Authority

Schedule of Findings

Year ended June 30, 2020

Findings Related to the Financial Statement:

INTERNAL CONTROL DEFICIENCIES:

(A) Segregation of Duties

Criteria – Management is responsible for establishing and maintaining internal control. A good system of internal control provides for adequate segregation of duties so no one individual handles a transaction from its inception to completion. In order to maintain proper internal control, duties should be segregated so the authorization, custody and recording of transactions are not under the control of the same employee. This segregation of duties helps prevent losses from employee error or dishonesty and maximizes the accuracy of the Authority's financial statement.

Condition – One individual has control over each of the following areas for the Authority for which there are no compensating controls:

- (1) Receipts – opening mail, collecting, depositing, recording, reconciling, posting and maintaining accounts receivable records.
- (2) Disbursements – invoice processing, check writing, mailing, reconciling and recording.
- (3) Investments – recordkeeping, investing, custody of investments and reconciling earnings.
- (4) Cash – handling, reconciling and recording.

We also noted the following:

- (5) Gate fee rates are not entered into the system by an independent person and there is no independent review of the rates to ensure they agree with approved rates.

Cause – The Authority has a limited number of employees and procedures have not been designed to adequately segregate duties or provide compensating controls through additional oversight of transfers and processes.

Effect – Inadequate segregation of duties could adversely affect the Authority's ability to prevent or detect and correct misstatements, errors or misappropriation on a timely basis by employees in the normal course of performing their assigned functions.

Recommendation – We realize segregation of duties is difficult with a limited number of office employees. However, the Authority should review its control procedures to obtain the maximum internal control possible under the circumstances utilizing currently available personnel, including Authority Board Members. Evidence of reviews should be documented by the signature or initials of the independent reviewer and the date of the review.

Great River Regional Waste Authority

Schedule of Findings

Year ended June 30, 2020

Response – GRRWA will continue with what we have for personnel, but we will attempt to satisfy the recommendation.

Conclusion – Response acknowledged. The Authority should continue to review its control procedures to obtain the maximum internal control possible under the circumstances.

(B) Financial Reporting

Criteria – A deficiency in internal control over financial reporting exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements of the financial statements on a timely basis. Properly designed policies and procedures and implementation of the policies and procedures are an integral part of ensuring the reliability and accuracy of the Authority's financial statements.

Condition – During the audit, we identified numerous posting errors which improperly classified receipts and disbursements. In addition, manual journal entries are not reviewed by an independent person. Adjustments were subsequently made to properly report receipts and disbursements in the financial statement.

Cause – Authority policies do not require, and procedures have not been established to require independent review of transactions to ensure the Authority's financial statements are accurate and reliable.

Effect – Lack of policies and procedures resulted in Authority employees not detecting the errors in the normal course of performing their assigned functions. As a result, material adjustments to the Authority's financial statements were necessary.

Recommendation – The Authority should implement procedures to ensure activity is recorded accurately throughout the year and journal entry support should be maintained and reviewed by an independent person. The review should be documented by the signature or initials of the reviewer and the date of the review.

Response – We will strive to follow the recommendations.

Conclusion – Response acknowledged. The Authority should implement procedures to ensure activity is recorded accurately throughout the year and that journal entry support is maintained and reviewed by an independent person. The review should be documented by the signature or initials of the reviewer and the date of the review.

(C) Customer Billings, Collections and Delinquent Accounts

Criteria – An effective internal control system provides for internal controls related to reconciling customer billings, collections and delinquent accounts to ensure proper recording of customer receipts, the propriety of adjustments and write-offs and the propriety of delinquent account balances.

Great River Regional Waste Authority

Schedule of Findings

Year ended June 30, 2020

Condition – Customer billings, collections and delinquent accounts were not reconciled.

Cause – Policies have not been established and procedures have not been implemented to reconcile customer billings, collections and delinquent accounts.

Effect – This condition could result in unrecorded or misstated customer receipts, improper or unauthorized adjustments and write-offs and/or misstated delinquent account balances.

Recommendation – Procedures should be established to reconcile customer billings, collections and delinquent accounts monthly. An independent person should review the reconciliations, monitor delinquent accounts and approve write-offs of uncollectible accounts. The review should be documented by the signature or initials of the reviewer and the date of the review.

Response – We will strive to follow the recommendations.

Conclusion – Response acknowledged. Procedures should be established to reconcile customer billings, collections and delinquent accounts monthly. An independent person should review the reconciliations, monitor delinquent accounts and approve write-offs of uncollectible accounts. The review should be documented by the signature or initials of the reviewer and the date of the review.

(D) Bank Reconciliations

Criteria – An effective internal control system provides for internal controls related to ensuring proper accounting for all funds by reconciling bank and book balances.

Condition – The Authority's financial activity is accounted for in several different bank accounts and certificates of deposit maintained by the Authority. A complete bank reconciliation, including all bank and investment accounts, is not prepared. Although bank reconciliations are prepared for each individual bank account and reviewed by an independent person, the reviewer does not always evidence their review by signing or initialing and dating the reconciliation. In addition, amounts reported as checks outstanding included \$21,754 of void checks which were not properly voided in the general ledger.

Cause – Procedures have not been designed and implemented to ensure all accounts are reconciled and the amounts recorded in the books are complete, accurate and properly accounted for. Further, procedures have not been designed and implemented to ensure void checks are properly voided in the general ledger and removed from the outstanding check listing.

Effect – The lack of a complete bank to book reconciliation can result in unrecorded transactions, undetected errors and the opportunity for misappropriation. Further, the lack of procedures to ensure void checks are properly voided in the general ledger can lead to errors in the general ledger.

Great River Regional Waste Authority

Schedule of Findings

Year ended June 30, 2020

Recommendation – To improve financial accountability and control, the Authority should prepare monthly bank reconciliations which include all bank and investment accounts and variances between book and bank balances should be investigated and resolved in a timely manner. The reconciliations should be reviewed by an independent person and the review should be documented by the signature or initials of the independent reviewer and the date of review. Void checks should be properly recorded in the general ledger.

Response – We will follow the recommendations.

Conclusion – Response accepted.

(E) Monthly Business Manager’s Reports

Criteria – A deficiency in internal control over financial reporting exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management to effectively perform their fiduciary responsibilities related to Authority financial management.

Condition – The monthly Authority Manager’s financial reports to the Authority Board Members included detailed receipts, disbursements and account balances; however, the reports do not provide a comparison between actual and budgeted activity.

Cause – Policies have not been established and procedures have not been implemented to require the Authority Manager to provide the Authority Board Members with the required financial information.

Effect – The Authority Board may not have effective control over budgeted disbursements.

Recommendation – To provide better control over budgeted disbursements, the Authority Manager’s financial reports to the Authority Board should include comparisons to budgeted activity.

Response – We will strive to provide more transparency between our actual and budgeted activity.

Conclusion – Response acknowledged. The Authority Manager’s financial reports to the Authority Board should include comparisons to the budgeted activity.

(F) Fees and Interest charges

Criteria – An effective internal control system provides for internal controls to ensure fees and interest are not paid because payments were not made timely.

Condition – During the year ended June 30, 2020, the Authority paid \$60 in late fees and interest charges to IPERS.

Cause – Policies have not been established and procedures have not been implemented to ensure the Authority does not pay late fees and interest charges.

Effect – The Authority may pay fees and interest charges that are not necessary.

Great River Regional Waste Authority

Schedule of Findings

Year ended June 30, 2020

Recommendation – The Authority should establish procedures to ensure IPERS is remitted timely to avoid unnecessary fees and interest charges.

Response – This matter will be discussed with the payroll firm so this will not happen in the future.

Response – Response accepted.

INSTANCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE:

No matters were noted.

Great River Regional Waste Authority

Schedule of Findings

Year ended June 30, 2020

Other Findings Related to Required Statutory Reporting:

- (1) Questionable Disbursements – No disbursements we believe may not meet the requirements of public purpose as defined in the Attorney General’s opinion dated April 25, 1979 were noted.
- (2) Travel Expense – No disbursements of Authority money for travel expenses of spouses of Authority officials or employees were noted.
- (3) Restricted Donor Activity – No transactions were noted between the Authority, Authority officials, Authority employees and restricted donors in compliance with Chapter 68B of the Code of Iowa.
- (4) Authority Minutes – No transactions were found that we believe should have been approved in the Authority’s Board minutes but were not; however, gross salaries were not published in accordance with Chapter 28E.6 of the Code of Iowa.

Recommendation – Gross salaries should be published each year on either a calendar or fiscal year basis.

Response – We will, in the future, follow the recommendations.

Conclusion – Response accepted.

- (5) Deposits and Investments – No instances of non-compliance with the deposit and investment provisions of Chapter 12B and Chapter 12C of the Code of Iowa and the Authority’s investment policy were noted.
- (6) Solid Waste Fees Retainage – No instances of non-compliance with the solid waste fees used or retained in accordance with provisions of Chapter 455B.310 of the Code of Iowa were noted.
- (7) Financial Assurance – The Authority has elected to demonstrate financial assurance for closure and postclosure care by establishing a local government dedicated fund and through the financial test mechanism, both as provided in Chapter 567–113.14(6) of the Iowa Administrative Code (IAC). The local government financial test mechanism is in place to assure those cost not covered by the dedicated fund mechanism. Financial assurance is demonstrated as follows:

	Postclosure		
	Closure	Care	Total
Total estimated cost for closure and postclosure care	\$ 3,480,205	1,256,061	4,736,266
Less: Balance of funds held in the local dedicated fund at June 30, 2019	2,377,615	1,190,379	3,567,994
Remaining costs to be assured through the local government financial test	1,102,590	65,682	1,168,272
Financial assurance through the local government financial test			<u>\$ 1,180,096</u>

Great River Regional Waste Authority

Schedule of Findings

Year ended June 30, 2020

Iowa Department of Natural Resources rules and regulations require deposits into the closure and postclosure care accounts be made at least annually within 30 days of the close of each fiscal year. At June 30, 2020, interest income on certificates of deposit were sufficient to cover the required deposit to the accounts.

- (8) Outstanding Checks – Outstanding checks greater than two years old were not remitted to the Office of Treasurer of State, as required by Chapter 556.11 of the Code of Iowa.

Recommendation – The Authority should remit all outstanding checks greater than two years old to the Office of Treasurer of State, as required.

Response – We will follow the recommendations.

Conclusion – Response accepted.

Great River Regional Waste Authority

Staff

This audit was performed by:

Marlys K. Gaston, CPA, Deputy
Janet K. Mortvedt, CPA, Manager
Jenna M. Paysen, Senior Auditor
Nathan A. DeWit, Staff Auditor
Brandon L. Weddell, Assistant Auditor