

VILLAGE OF NORTH
BARRINGTON, ILLINOIS

MANAGEMENT LETTER



FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED
APRIL 30, 2023

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January 10, 2024

The Honorable Village President
Members of the Board of Trustees
Village of North Barrington, Illinois

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements of the Village of North Barrington, Illinois, for the fiscal year ended April 30, 2023, we considered its internal control structure in order to determine our auditing procedures for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements and not to provide assurance on the internal control structure.

We do not intend to imply that our audit failed to disclose commendable aspects of your system and structure. For your consideration we herein submit our comments and suggestions which are designed to assist in effecting improvements in internal controls and procedures. Those less significant matters, if any, which arose during the course of the audit, were reviewed with management as the audit fieldwork progressed.

The accompanying comments and recommendations are intended solely for the information and use of the Board of Trustees, management, and others within the Village of North Barrington, Illinois.

We will review the status of these comments during our next audit engagement. We have already discussed many of these comments and suggestions with various Village personnel. We would be pleased to discuss our comments and suggestions in further detail with you at your convenience, to perform any additional study of these matters, or to review the procedures necessary to bring about desirable changes.

We appreciate the courtesy and assistance given to us by the entire Village staff.

Lauterbach & Amen, LLP
LAUTERBACH & AMEN, LLP

CURRENT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. GASB STATEMENT NO. 94 PRIVATE-PUBLIC AND PUBLIC-PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS AND AVAILABILITY PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Comment

In March 2022, the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) issued Statement No. 94, *Public-Private and Public-Public Partnerships and Availability Payment Arrangements*, which provides guidance regarding the information needs of financial statement users by improving the comparability of financial statements among governments that enter into public-private and public-public partnerships (PPPs) and availability payment arrangements (APAs) and by enhancing the understandability, reliability, relevance, and consistency of information about PPPs and APAs. A PPP is an arrangement in which a government (the transferor) contracts with an operator to provide public services by conveying control of the right to operate or use a nonfinancial asset, such as infrastructure or other capital asset (the underlying PPP asset), for a period of time in an exchange or exchange-like transaction. Some PPPs meet the definitions Service Concession Arrangements (SCAs) if (a) the operator collects and is compensated by fees from third parties, (b) the transferor (government) determines or has the ability to modify or approve which services the operator is required to provide, to whom the operator is required to provide the services, and the prices or rates that can be charged for the services, and (c) the transferor (government) is entitled to significant residual interest in the service utility of the underlying PPP asset at the end of the arrangement. An APA is an arrangement in which a government compensates an operator for activities that may include designing, constructing, financing, maintaining, or operating an underlying nonfinancial asset for a period of time in an exchange or exchange-like transaction. GASB Statement No. 94, *Public-Private and Public-Public Partnerships and Availability Payment Arrangements* is applicable to the Village's financial statements for the year ended April 30, 2024.

Recommendation

Lauterbach & Amen, LLP will work directly with the Village to review the new criteria associated with PPPs and PPAAs to determine the appropriate financial reporting for these activities under GASB Statement No. 94.

Management's Response

Management acknowledges this comment and, if applicable, will work to implement it when required by GASB.

CURRENT RECOMMENDATIONS – Continued

2. GASB STATEMENT NO. 96 SUBSCRIPTION-BASED INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ARRANGEMENTS

Comment

In May 2020, the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) issued Statement No. 96, *Subscription-Based Information Technology Arrangements*, which provides guidance regarding the information needs of financial statement users by improving accounting and financial reporting for Subscription-Based Information Technology Arrangements (SBITAs) by governments. It establishes uniform accounting and financial reporting requirements for SBITAs, improves the comparability of financial statements among governments that have entered into SBITAs, and enhances the understandability, reliability, relevance, and consistency of information about SBITAs. GASB Statement No. 96, *Subscription-Based Information Technology Arrangements* is applicable to the Village's financial statements for the year ended April 30, 2024.

Recommendation

Lauterbach & Amen, LLP will work directly with the Village to review the new SBITA criteria in conjunction with the Village's current arrangements to determine the appropriate financial reporting for these activities under GASB Statement No. 96.

Management's Response

Management acknowledges this comment and, if applicable, will work to implement it when required by GASB.

3. GASB STATEMENT NO. 100 ACCOUNTING CHANGES AND ERROR CORRECTIONS

Comment

In June 2022, the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) issued Statement No. 100, *Accounting Changes and Error Corrections*, which establishes accounting and financial reporting requirements for (a) accounting changes, and (b) the correction of an error in previously issued financial statements (error correction). Accounting changes are (a) changes in accounting principle, (b) changes in accounting estimates, or (c) changes to or within the financial reporting entity. Error corrections are (a) errors from mathematical mistakes, mistakes in the application of accounting principles, or oversight or misuse of facts that existed at the time the financial statements were issued, or (b) a change from (i) applying an accounting principle that is not generally accepted to transactions or other events that previously were significant to (ii) applying a generally accepted accounting principle to those transactions or other events is an error correction. GASB Statement No. 100 requires that (a) changes in accounting principal and error corrections are reported retroactively, (b) changes in accounting estimates are reported prospectively, and (c) changes to or within the financial reporting entity should be reported by adjusting the current reporting period's beginning net position, fund balance, or fund net position, as applicable, for the effect of the change as if the change occurred as of the beginning of the reporting period. GASB Statement No. 100, *Accounting Changes and Error Corrections* is applicable to the Village's financial statements for the year ended April 30, 2025.

CURRENT RECOMMENDATIONS – Continued

3. **GASB STATEMENT NO. 100 ACCOUNTING CHANGES AND ERROR CORRECTIONS** **– Continued**

Recommendation

Lauterbach & Amen, LLP will work directly with the Village to review any accounting changes or error corrections to determine the appropriate financial reporting for these activities under GASB Statement No. 100.

Management's Response

Management acknowledges this comment and, if applicable, will work to implement it when required by GASB.

4. **GASB STATEMENT NO. 101 COMPENSATED ABSENCES**

Comment

In June 2022, the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) issued Statement No. 101, *Compensated Absences*, which establishes standards of accounting and financial reporting for (a) compensated absences, and (b) associated salary-related payments, including certain defined contribution pensions and defined contribution other postemployment benefits (OPEB). The statement requires that a liability should be recognized for any type of leave that has not been used at year-end if (a) The leave is attributable to services already rendered, (b) the leave accumulates, and (c) the leave is more likely than not to be used for time off or otherwise paid in cash or settled through noncash means. Examples of leave that should be reviewed, and potentially measured under GASB Statement No. 101 are vacation leave, paid time off leave, holiday leave, and sick leave. Examples of leave that are excluded from GASB Statement No. 101 are parental leave, military leave, and jury duty leave. GASB Statement No. 101, *Compensated Absences* is applicable to the Village's financial statements for the year ended April 30, 2025.

Recommendation

Lauterbach & Amen, LLP will work directly with the Village to review the new compensated absences and associated salary-related payments, including certain defined contribution pensions and defined contribution other postemployment benefits criteria to determine the appropriate financial reporting for these activities under GASB Statement No. 101.

Management's Response

Management acknowledges this comment and, if applicable, will work to implement it when required by GASB.

PRIOR RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **GASB STATEMENT NO. 87 LEASES**

Comment

In June 2017, the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) issued Statement No. 87, *Leases*, which provides guidance regarding the information needs of financial statement users by improving accounting and financial reporting for leases by governments. It establishes a single model for lease accounting based on the foundational principle that leases are financings of the right to use an underlying asset. Under this Statement, a lessee is required to recognize a lease liability and an intangible right-to-use lease asset, and a lessor is required to recognize a lease receivable and a deferred inflow of resources, thereby enhancing the relevance and consistency of information about governments' leasing activities. In accordance with GASB Statement No. 95, *Postponement of the Effective Dates of Certain Authoritative Guidance*, which was issued as temporary relieve to governments and other stakeholders in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, GASB Statement No. 87, *Leases* is applicable to the Village's financial statements for the year ended April 30, 2023.

Recommendation

Lauterbach & Amen, LLP will work directly with the Village to review the new lease criteria in conjunction with the Village's current leases to determine the appropriate financial reporting for these activities under GASB Statement No. 87.

Status

As the Village has no material leases, there was no impact on the financial statements in the current year, therefore this comment is considered implemented. The Village and Lauterbach & Amen will continue to monitor leases in the future to determine if additional reporting is required.

2. **FUND BALANCE POLICY**

Previously and during our current year-end audit procedures, we noted that the Village does not have a formal fund balance policy. A fund balance policy establishes a minimum level at which the projected end-of-year fund balance should be maintained, taking into account the constraints imposed upon the resources reported by the governmental funds. A fund balance policy assists in providing financial stability, cash flow for operations, and the assurance that the Village will be able to respond to emergencies with fiscal strength.

It is essential to maintain adequate levels of funds balance to mitigate current and future risks and to ensure tax rates. Fund balance levels are also crucial consideration in long-term financial planning. Credit rating agencies carefully monitor levels of fund balance and unassigned fund balance in the General Fund to evaluate the Village's continued creditworthiness.

Recommendation

We recommended the Village create and adopt a fund balance policy to be in compliance with GASB Statement No. 54. The Village should address fund balance reporting categories (nonspendable, restricted, committed, assigned, and unassigned) as well as review minimum fund balance policies.

PRIOR RECOMMENDATIONS - Continued

2. **FUND BALANCE POLICY – Continued**

Status

This comment has not been implemented and will be repeated in the future.

Management Response

Management acknowledges this comment and will work to correct it in the coming year.

3. **ESCROW DEPOSITS AND DEPOSITS HELD FOR REFUND**

Comment

Previously, we noted that the Village does not reconcile escrow deposits or the deposits held for refund to the general ledger on a monthly basis.

Recommendation

We recommended that the Village reconcile the escrow deposits and deposits held for refund on a monthly basis.

Status

This comment has been implemented and will not be repeated in the future.

4. **POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL**

Comment

Previously and during our current year-end audit procedures, the Village does not have a policy and procedure manual. Written procedures, instructions and assignments of duties will prevent or reduce misunderstanding, error; inefficient or wasted effort duplicated or omitted procedures and other situations that can result in inaccurate or untimely accounting records. A policy and procedure manual should aid in the training of new employees and possibly allow for delegation to other employees of some accounting functions that management currently performs.

A policy and procedure manual will require a substantial investment of time and effort for management to develop. However, we believe this time will be more than offset by time saved later in training and supervising accounting personnel. Also, in the process of the comprehensive review of existing accounting procedures, for the purpose of developing the manual, management may discover procedures that can be eliminated or improved to make the system more efficient and effective.

PRIOR RECOMMENDATIONS – Continued

4. POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL – Continued

Recommendation

A sample of areas that should be covered as the accounting portion of the procedure manual is as follows:

- Job descriptions
- Flow charts and descriptions of the accounting cycles, such as:
 - Cash receipts process – collections, deposits, bank reconciliations, etc.
 - Cash disbursements and accounts payable process – approvals, coding, purchasing, check preparation, invoice cancellation, general ledger posting, etc.
 - Payroll process – hiring, employee files, time cards, distribution, etc.
- Description of standard entries and allocations
- Description of other specific accounting areas of unusual nature

Status

This comment has not been implemented and will be repeated in the future.

Management Response

Management acknowledges this comment and will work to correct it in the coming year.