

UTILITY ADVISORY BOARD

Thursday, July 16, 2026

8:30 – 10:00 am

AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes – June 18, 2026
2. Public Comments on Agenda Items
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Legal Services - Jernberg
5. Updates
 - a. Water/Sewer Report (June) – McCaul
 - b. DWRf funding update- Jernberg
6. Public Comments
7. Items from Members
8. Next Meeting – August 16, 2026
9. Adjournment

UTILITY ADVISORY BOARD
Thursday, June 18, 2026
MINUTES

Members Present

Mark Bennett, Mike DeVries, Samarhia Giffel, Jared Grabinski, Wayne Jernberg, Jim Kirkwood, Doug La Fave, James Ouzts, Lindsay Sagorski Munsell, Chad Reul, and Tai Verbrugge

Alternates Present

Alan Avitia, Todd Boerman, Brian Bradley, Scott Connors, Wayne Harrall, and Reina Watanabe

Others Present

Kolene Allen, Kurt Anderson, Joe Platte, Arden Postma, and Ashley Powers

Call to Order

Mr. Jernberg called the meeting to order at 8:31 am.

Approval of Minutes – May 21, 2026

Motion to approve the minutes made by Mr. DeVries and seconded by Mr. Bennett.

MOTION CARRIED.

Public Comments on Agenda Items

There were no public comments.

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda made by Ms. Giffel and seconded by Mr. Verbrugge.

MOTION CARRIED.

2026 Water/Sewer Rate Study

- **Schedule**
Mr. Verbrugge presented a memo outlining the 2026 Water/Sewer Rate Study Schedule. The preliminary rate study will be presented to UAB on November 9, 2026 for approval.

No action was taken. A copy of the memo is on file.

- **USD Size Recommendations**
Mr. Verbrugge reported that no communities requested changes to their USD maps. As such, there will be no changes in 2026.

A motion to approve the USD maps as presented was made by Mr. Bennett and seconded by Mr. DeVries.

MOTION CARRIED.

Zonegating Changes for Sanitary Sewer

Mr. Bradley gave a presentation on significant changes made to sewage zonegating allocations in segments S-16, S-14, S-108A, and S-126.

The potential impact on 2026 sewer rates was estimated using 2025 rates.

Members asked questions and discussed the information presented. No action was taken. A copy of the presentation is on file.

Sewer Use Ordinance

Mr. Anderson gave a presentation on the status of the Sewer Use Ordinance. It is expected that UAB will vote to approve the final Sewer Use Ordinance in Spring 2027.

The proposed changes were emailed to all members. Members asked questions and discussed the information presented. No action was taken. A copy of the presentation is on file.

Infrastructure Funding Taskforce

Mr. Jernberg reported that he was approached by an agency representing Great Lakes Water Authority that is hosting online town hall meetings with larger water systems across the state to discuss the lack in infrastructure funding. Mr. Jernberg and Mr. Verbrugge attended one of their listening sessions. They shared information about the City's rate study process, how infrastructure projects are funded, existing funding gaps, and the efforts made to balance necessary infrastructure investments with rate impacts and affordability. They also discussed the City's long-term strategy for planning and prioritizing projects over a 5- to 20-year timeframe. Other communities included were Ann Arbor, Plainfield, and Muskegon. The feedback collected which will be shared in a report later this summer. The long-term goal of these efforts is to build support for a 2028 ballot initiative to address water and sewer infrastructure funding across the state. Additional information will be shared as it becomes available.

Updates

Data Centers

Mr. Jernberg reported that City of Grand Rapids staff have been meeting to discuss the potential impacts of data centers and other large-scale users on the water and sewer systems. Staff are evaluating four key areas: industrial pretreatment and the Water Resource Recovery Facility, the collection system, water distribution, and billing/financing. Staff are developing talking points for the Utility Advisory Board to help guide future decision-making regarding large-scale users.

Considerations include:

- Whether potential new users are strategically located in areas where existing infrastructure can support their demands.
- Requiring developers with significant water demands to use the City's consultants to conduct a hydraulic analysis and evaluate potential impacts on the water distribution system.
- Concerns that while developers may be willing to fund upfront infrastructure improvements needed to support their projects, those contributions may not account for the long-term replacement costs associated with that infrastructure 50 to 75 years in the future.
- The potential for oversized infrastructure to create future operational challenges if a user's demand decreases or the user leaves the system, which could result in water quality concerns due to reduced water use.

There are also concerns over energy usage and how that may affect electrical rates.

Water and Sewer Connection Policy

Mr. Jernberg reported that he, Mr. DeVries, Ms. Nugent, and Mr. Conners met with representatives of the Kent County Health Department to develop a standardized water and sewer connection policy.

Mr. Jernberg and Mr. Conners drafted proposed changes to the City of Grand Rapids code that will enhance collaboration between the City, local health departments, and local communities.

A draft Standard Operating Procedure is also being developed. Both documents will be reviewed at the group's next meeting in late July. A representative from Ottawa County Department of Public Health will be joining the discussion at that time.

Once these documents are further developed, they will be presented to the Utility Advisory Board for review and finalization. Following Board approval, the process to amend the City's Code will begin.

Public Comments

Mr. Platte reported that physical copies of the draft CMP are available.

Items from Members

- Mr. Conners stated that the City should feel comfortable requesting additional information from partner communities when situations arise, such as the recent Lowell development. Mr. Jernberg stated that the City trusts that communities will share all available information. He noted that hydraulic modeling will help evaluate potential impacts but emphasized that communities should not hesitate to engage the City early with questions regarding connection points, system capacity, or the transfer of flows through the treatment facilities. The City's goal is to ensure all relevant information is available and evaluated before agreements are finalized with developers.
- Mr. Ouzts introduced Mr. Reul to the group who joined the Utility Advisory Board in May.

He also gave an update on the six-month agreement with Wyoming to assess their sludge. There was an optional six-month renewal period. During that period, adjustments were made to switch from charging per gallon to charging per dry ton. A flow meter was also installed to calculate the dry tons which allows the City to more accurately charge for the loading of the digester, not just the flow. The agreement also allows the City to recuperate 33% of the capital costs, in addition to operational costs. The City Commission approved this agreement at their last meeting.

Also, there have been discussions with Kent County and Vicinity regarding the Waste-to-Energy facility. The facility is seeking access to final effluent (FE) for cooling towers when Grand River levels are low. They could use FE if a pipeline is installed to deliver it to the facility. Potable water is also an option; however, it would be the most expensive alternative.

During these discussions, the City proposed sending biosolids to the facility for incineration. This could benefit the facility by helping to lower temperatures in the incinerators, allowing it to burn more municipal solid waste while keeping the biosolids out of the landfill. The facility is requesting an exemption from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) permit requirements to allow a pilot project to burn the City's digestate.

If the FE pipeline is installed, additional infrastructure could also be added to receive steam from the facility to help heat the digesters or support energy production. A conduit could also be installed to transmit electricity generated by the facility to help power the Water Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF).

- Ms. Sagorski reported that the Water System was on standby to Wyoming for their transmission main project which was completed and the City's interconnect has been closed.
- Mr. Jernberg reported that, regarding the Wyoming contract, the City advocated for Wyoming's allocation of 33% of the capital costs, recognizing that without the third digester, the City would not have been able to accept Wyoming's sludge. While there are no definitive figures, the additional capacity is expected to help reduce overall integrated costs and provide benefits across the system. The City also incurred costs associated with purchasing a third renewable natural gas (RNG) skid.

Mr. Jernberg also informed the Board that he received communication from Pat Staskiewicz of Ottawa County regarding issues between Ottawa County and Wyoming are having with Georgetown Township related to their water contracts. Georgetown Township's attorneys have referenced Grand Rapids as a potential water source during those discussions. Mr. Jernberg responded by thanking Mr. Staskiewicz for sharing the information and stating that the City would not be used as leverage in their ongoing negotiations. He emphasized that the available capacity within the Grand Rapids system belongs to all Utility Advisory Board communities, and no additional community would be added without agreement from the existing partners. He further stated that the City values its partnership with Wyoming and does not wish to be involved in any disputes occurring between Georgetown Township and Wyoming.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for July 16, 2026.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:27 am.

Bloom Sluggett, PC

COUNSELORS & ATTORNEYS

Jessica Wood

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jessica@bloomsluggett.com

July 10, 2026

Grand Valley Regional Biosolids Authority
1300 Market Ave SW
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

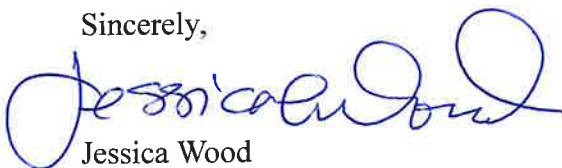
Dear Board Members:

As you are aware, effective June 16, 2026, I have joined Bloom Sluggett, PC, and am no longer with Dickinson Wright, PLLC. It has been a privilege serving as legal counsel to the Board, and I greatly value the professional relationship we have developed. I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to continue serving as legal counsel to the Board.

The purpose of this letter is to inform the Board of my change in professional affiliation. Should the Board determine that it wishes to continue its attorney-client relationship with me, I would be honored to continue serving as its legal counsel through Bloom Sluggett, PC, along with my partner, Toby Koenig. Any transfer of client files or ongoing matters would be handled promptly (electronically) and in accordance with the Board's instructions and all applicable professional obligations to ensure an orderly and seamless transition.

Thank you again for the opportunity to present this proposal to the Board. It has been an honor to work with the Board and its staff, and I hope to have the privilege of continuing that relationship in the future. Should you have any questions regarding this transition, or if I may be of assistance in any way, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Jessica Wood

Bloom Sluggett, PC

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July 10, 2026

Grand Valley Regional Biosolids Authority
Attn: Wayne Jernberg
1300 Market Ave, SW
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503

RE: Proposed Engagement Letter for Legal Services

Dear Wayne:

We appreciate the opportunity to provide this letter describing the terms of our proposed engagement. Our understanding is that Bloom Sluggett, PC ("BSPC") would serve as general legal counsel, assisting the Grand Valley Regional Biosolids Authority ("GVRBA") on legal matters and any other work as directed by you, Environmental Services Department Manager James Outz, and/or the GVRBA Board.

I (Jessica Wood) and Toby Koenig will be responsible for managing the GVRBA's engagement of BSPC. Shareholders' time will be charged at \$240 per hour, associate attorneys' time will be charged at \$210 per hour, and paralegals, if needed, will bill at \$135 per hour. Time is calculated in tenths of hours.

BSPC generally renders statements monthly. Our billings are due and payable upon presentation, but in no event later than 30 days from the date of the invoice. We reserve the right to suspend work and withdraw if invoices are not paid in time.

BSPC will bill the GVRBA for expenses incurred on the GVRBA's behalf at cost and without any administrative mark-up.

The GVRBA may terminate its relationship with BSPC at any time, with or without cause, by notifying BSPC in writing. If the GVRBA terminates, BSPC will return to the GVRBA all files and original papers and other property in our possession upon our receipt of payment of any outstanding fees and disbursements for work already performed.

BSPC reserves the right to withdraw from representing the GVRBA consistent with its ethical obligations. BSPC will try to identify in advance and discuss any situation that may lead to withdrawal, and if withdrawal becomes necessary, BSPC will promptly give the GVRBA notice. If it becomes necessary for BSPC to withdraw, the GVRBA agrees to perform whatever steps are reasonably necessary to complete withdrawal, including the execution of any stipulations for court proceedings or other documents, and to pay for all services performed and expenses incurred on the GVRBA's behalf before the withdrawal.

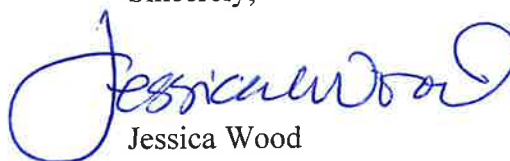
The GVRBA's files will be maintained as long as legally required, but in no case three years after the representation has ended. BSPC has the right to maintain the GVRBA's closed files electronically, and to shred the hard copies of the documents at the time a matter is closed.

We would welcome the opportunity to work with the GVRBA and would be glad to answer any remaining questions which the GVRBA might have.

Please confirm that the arrangements set out above are acceptable to the GVRBA by signing a copy of this letter and returning it to me.

Thank you again for the potential opportunity to serve the GVRBA.

Sincerely,



Jessica Wood

* * *

Grand Valley Regional Biosolids Authority
agrees to the above terms:

Dated: _____, 2026

By: _____
Its _____

Bloom Sluggett, PC

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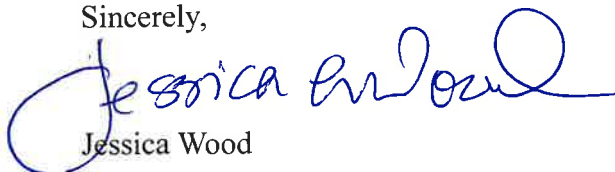
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Bloom Sluggett, PC, also serves as general counsel to several of the Board's customer communities (Ada Township, City of Kentwood, City of Walker, Wright Township, and Gaines Charter Township), and although we do not believe that our narrow representation of the customer communities and the UAB will adversely affect either the UAB or the customer communities, potential conflict waiver letters are nonetheless ethically necessary to move forward with Bloom Sluggett's representation. I have prepared proposed waiver letters for the Board and each of the customer communities to review.

Thank you again for the opportunity to present this proposal to the Board. It has been an honor to work with the Board and its staff, and I hope to have the privilege of continuing that relationship in the future. Should you have any questions regarding this transition, or if I may be of assistance in any way, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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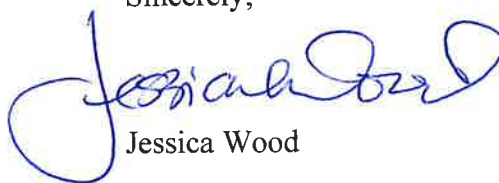
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Thank you again for the potential opportunity to serve the UAB.

Sincerely,



Jessica Wood

* * *

City of Grand Rapids Utility Advisory Board
agrees to the above terms:

Dated: _____, 2026

By: _____
Its _____

**Water/Sewer UAB Report
June 2026**

Project Name	Contractor	Award Date	Substantial Completion Date	Final Completion Date	Water Fund Authorized NTE Amt	Sewer Fund Authorized NTE Amt	Est. Year for Rates	Integrated (Y/N)
Replacement of Backwash Check Valves at the LAKE MICHIGAN FILTRATION PLANT	DHE Plumbing and Mechanical, Inc.	11/18/2025	5/29/2026	6/26/2026	\$ 425,870.00	N/A	2026	Y
Reconstruction of MILLBANK STREET from Giddings Avenue to Newcastle Drive	Ponstein Enterprises, LLC (dba Georgetown Construction)	6/16/2026	6/4/2027	8/6/2027	\$ 586,480.00	N/A	2027	N (GR)
Improvements to the Cold Storage Building at the WATER RESOURCE RECOVERY FACILITY	Stedfast Construction, Inc.	6/16/2026	10/30/2026	11/30/2026	N/A	\$ 288,770.00	2027	Y