

GULL LAKE  
SEWER  
& WATER  
AUTHORITY

*Board Training*

2024



GLSWA

*Gull Lake Sewer & Water Authority*

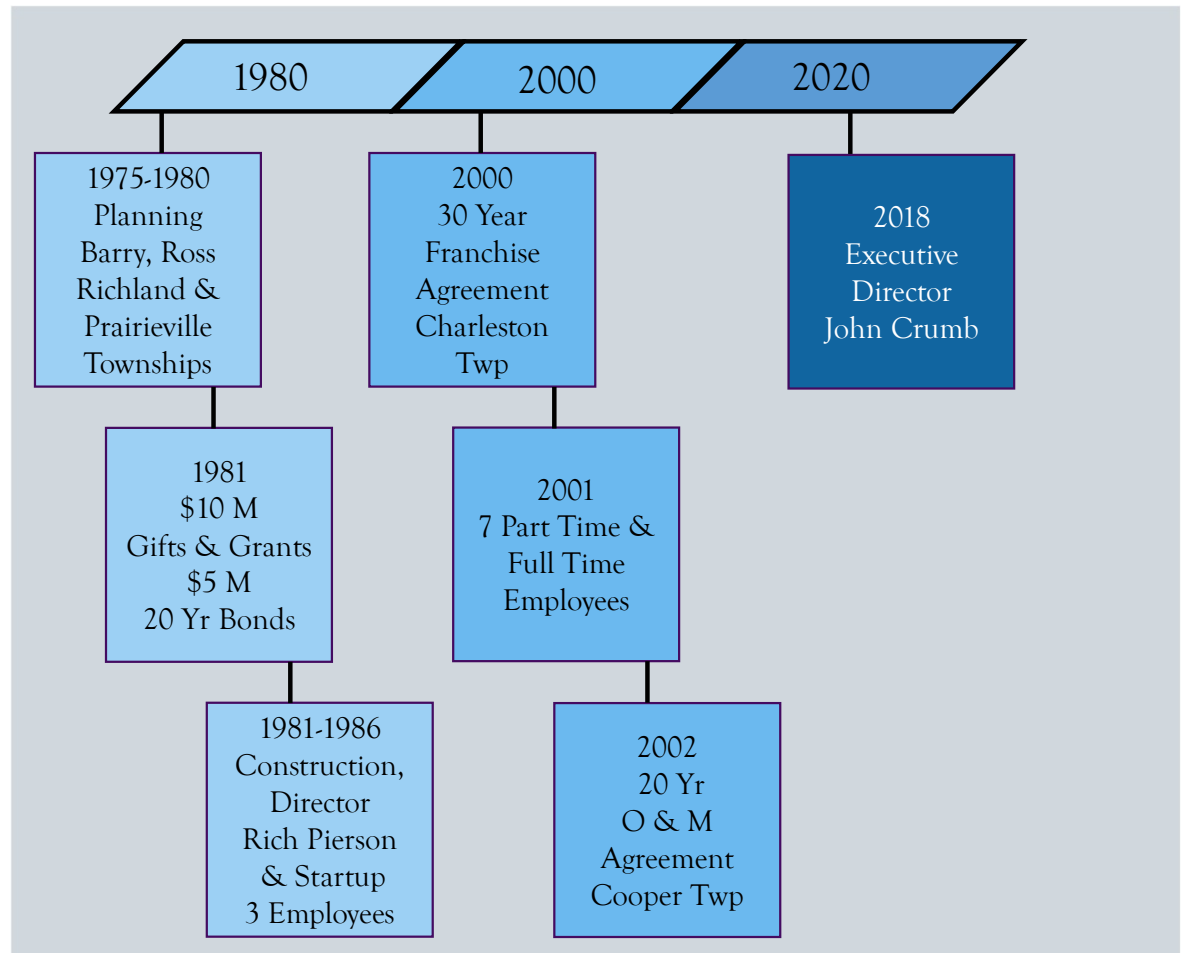
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- History of the Authority
- Legal
- Roles & Responsibilities
- Meeting Protocol
- Strategic Planning
- Finances, Budgets, & Rate Setting
- Q&A

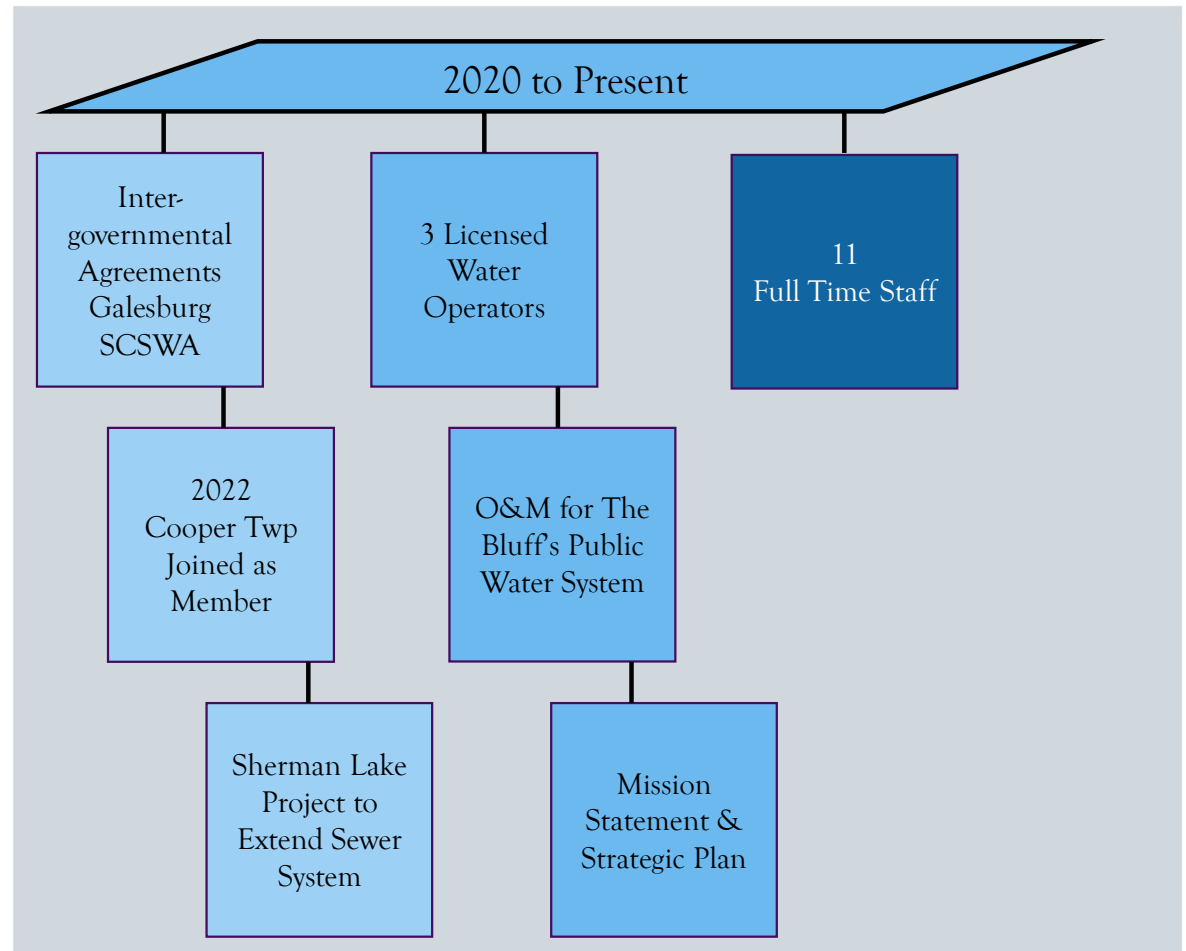


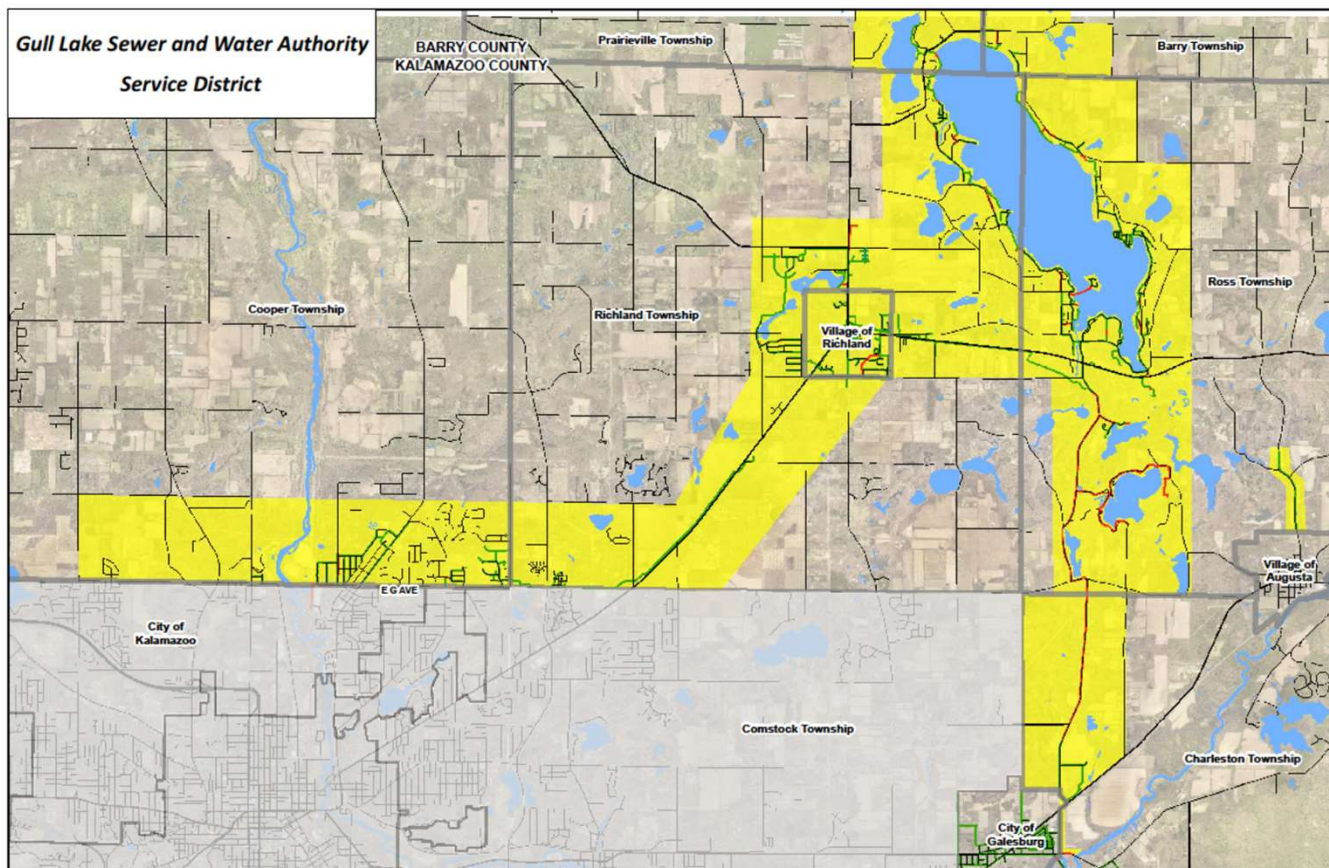
# HISTORY OF THE AUTHORITY

# HISTORY OF THE AUTHORITY



# HISTORY OF THE AUTHORITY (CONTINUED)





SEWER FLOWS TOWARDS THE CITY OF KALAMAZOO

# ROLE OF THE CITY OF KALAMAZOO

- The permitted sewer collection and discharge site.
- The owner of the Wastewater Treatment Plant's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit.

Kalamazoo Water Reclamation Plant



# WHAT IS A SEWER & WATER AUTHORITY?

- Under Public Act 233 of 1955, a sewer and water authority is a separate governmental entity incorporated by two or more municipalities.
- Gull Lake Sewer & Water Authority is the public authority that provides sewer and water services to a regional area.



# LEGAL INFORMATION



David Klevorn



Lindsay Dangl

# YOUR LEGAL TEAM

MURPHY &  
 SPAGNUOLO<sup>PC</sup>  
*Attorneys at Law*

# COMMUNICATION



As this presentation is being given at an open meeting, the information herein is not subject to the attorney-client privilege.



The goal is to provide an overview of the law, not address specific questions.

For personalized inquiries, Commissioners may contact our office for a privileged conversation.

# ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

The Articles of Incorporation are the foundational legal document filed with the State to formally establish the authority as an entity – separate and distinct from the participating municipalities.

These articles set forth the corporation's name, purpose, structure, and other essential details, such as the names of its incorporators, duration, and the governing framework.

For municipal authorities, like those created under Act 233 of 1955, the Articles of Incorporation outline the authority's scope, powers, membership, and operational rules, serving as a charter for its legal existence and governance.



## PURPOSE

The Articles state the purpose of GLSWA is to “acquire, construct, purchase, finance, own, improve, enlarge, extend, operate, maintain, administer, and manage sewage disposal systems and water supply systems in accordance with the authorization of Act 233, Public Acts of Michigan, 1955”

Your actions must be consistent with that purpose.

MCL  
124.284d

# POWERS

The Articles state GLSWA  
“shall possess all of the powers  
granted by statute and by these  
Articles, and those incident  
thereto.”

## ARTICLE IV

---

GLSWA has the power  
“to sue and be sued”

## ARTICLE XI

---

“The Authority shall possess all the powers necessary to carry out the purposes thereof and those incident thereto.”

Includes the power to acquire private property and manage such property

## MCL 124.284(2)

---

- Adopt bylaws
- Adopt an official seal
- Maintain an office
- Sue and be sued
- Construct projects and public improvements.
- Issue bonds
- Adopt and promulgate rules and regulations
- Acquire, hold, and dispose of real and personal property

## MCL 124.284d

---

“The power to bring an action in a court...to enjoin the violation of a rule or regulation ...or to recover actual damages sustained due to the violation, or both.”

P  
O  
W  
E  
R  
S

# BYLAWS



Bylaws are the internal rules and procedures to govern your operations and management.



Bylaws detail the roles and responsibilities of officers, the structure and function of the governing body, meeting protocols, decision-making processes, financial oversight, and other operational guidelines.



They serve as a framework to ensure the organization operates effectively and in compliance with applicable laws and its Articles of Incorporation.



Bylaws are binding on members and guide the organization's day-to-day activities.



# HIGHLIGHTS FROM YOUR BYLAWS

## Article II

- The governing body of the Authority is its Commission.
- Commissioners are appointed by the participating municipalities.
- Each Commissioner has a fiduciary obligation to act in the best interests of the Authority.

# ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

# MEMBER TOWNSHIP ROLES

- Appoint elected township official to the Authority Board of Commissions.
- Support Utility Rate
  - Approve the utility rate to be collected by the Authority, which supports the budget,  
OR
  - Pay the Authority out of the general fund.

MEMBER  
TOWNSHIP  
ROLES  
(CONTINUED)

- Set Ordinance(s) for Enforcement:
  - Support required connections, where applicable.
  - Update/amend ordinances, as needed.
- Bonding Agent or Assessing for planned growth
- Planning and Development Cooperation
  - Township engineer works with Authority's engineer
  - Building, zoning & permit coordination to ensure continuity

## COMMISSIONER ROLES

- Represent your township at the GLSWA Board.
- Represent GLSWA at your township board meetings.
- Collaborate with all Commissioners in the interest of the Authority and the rate payers.
- Fiscal responsibility to the Authority.
- Annual Strategic Planning oversight.

## COMMISSIONER ROLES

(CONTINUED)

- Direct public sewer & water questions back to the Authority
  - “Let me get back to you with the answer.”
- Meet collaboratively with Authority leadership staff regarding taxpayer/rate payer concerns and issues.
- Be able to speak as one voice as the Authority Board of Commissioners.

## GLSWA ROLES

- Operate as the Member Township's agent/vendor for sewer and water
  - Daily operations, maintenance, repair, and capital investments in sewer and water systems.
  - Customer interface with quick responses and skilled staff.
- Long-term planning for growth and expansion
- Provide feedback and directive with member townships for formal action items

## GLSWA ROLES

(CONTINUED)

- Provide budget, rates and financials for adoption
- Collaborative voice
  - City of Kalamazoo
  - Utility Policy Committee (UPC)
  - Regional Water and Wastewater Commission
- Resource for other Authorities and local governments



# EXPECTATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- Actively engaging with member Townships
  - Taxpayer sewer & water questions
  - Township board meetings
  - Provide professional opinions and advice related to sewer and water systems
- Ensures future continuity & stability of the Authority

EXPECTATIONS  
OF THE  
EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR  
(CONTINUED)

- Provide leadership, planning & guidance to staff.
  - Provide the staff with all available resources such as equipment, training and system knowledge, and support.
  - Empowers staff to execute roles and responsibilities
- Fiscal responsibility to the Authority through:
  - UPC & Regional participation
  - Financials of the Authority
  - Skilled workforce
  - Planning & research
  - Key vendor relations

EXPECTATIONS  
OF THE  
EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR  
(CONTINUED)

- Strategic Planning
  - Planning progress and accountability updates provided by the Director.

# MEETING PROTOCOL

# OPEN MEETINGS ACT

PUBLIC ACT  
NO. 267  
OF 1976,  
AS AMENDED

- Authorities are bound by the Open Meetings Act.
- Open to the public and improve transparency.
- Meeting agendas Posted 18 hours (min.) in advance.
- Robert's Rules of Order as a guideline.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

- This is the time for the public to communicate to the Authority board.
- No dialog between the Board and the Public – one way communication.
- Chairman directs the Executive Director to follow up as needed.
- Public may request to be heard as an agenda item.

*Board Meeting rules for public comment.pdf*

## SPECIAL MEETINGS & CLOSED SESSION

- Special Meetings
  - Are held when issue(s) cannot wait for the next scheduled Board meeting.
  - Are called by the Chairman at the desire of the Executive Director or counsel.
- Closed Sessions
  - For limited purposes allowed in the OMA. Contact legal counsel.

## MEETING PACKETS

- Requests for Agenda items are preferred to be submitted in writing 5 business days in advance of next scheduled meeting.
- Published 2 business days in advance.
- REQUIRED confirmation response for:
  - 1.) Packet received
  - 2.) Ability to attend
- Review packet contents and ask questions of the Executive Director ahead of the meeting.
- Agenda amendments are vetted through legal counsel.



## NEWLY ELECTED OFFICERS

- Officers are elected annually.
- Positions Include:
  - Chairperson
  - Vice Chairperson
  - Secretary
  - Treasurer



# MEETING GROUND RULES

- Attendance
  - Notice provided to the Chairperson and Executive Director regarding a Commissioner's inability to attend and why.
  - Courtesy to ensure quorum or reschedule meeting if necessary. Quorum is 3 of 5 Commissioners in attendance.
  - Contact the Executive Director for an update shortly after any missed meeting.
- Bylaws: Article V – Meetings – Section 4. Meeting Attendance
  - If a Commissioner neglects to perform his or her duties by failing to attend three (3) scheduled Regular Meetings of the Commission in a one (1) year period, and such absence is without valid reason given to the Commission Chairperson, the Commissioner shall be asked to resign from the Commission.

# GENERAL GROUND RULES

(CONTINUED)

- 2023 Authority Board Workshop.
  - Attend and participate.
  - Professionalism in Conducting Business.
  - Listen and Evaluate.
  - Support and Respect.
  - Knowledge of Roles
  - Knowledge of Authority and Townships.
  - Support All.
  - Ask Questions.
  - **Be able to speak with one voice as a Board.**



ABOUT GLSWA  
MISSION STATEMENT  
&  
STRATEGIC PLANNING

## ABOUT US

Gull Lake Sewer & Water Authority (GLSWA) is a public body, funded through user fees and intergovernmental agreements with no taxing authority.

The Board of Commissioners is comprised of one designated official from each supporting township:

- Barry Township
- Cooper Township
- Prairieville Township
- Richland Township and
- Ross Township

## MISSION STATEMENT

Gull Lake Sewer & Water Authority (GLSWA) is committed to doing everything within its capacity to provide safe, reliable and high-quality wastewater and water services while meeting or exceeding all regulatory requirements, acting in fairness to our stakeholders, and dedicated to being collaborative with partners to benefit our authority, and fiscally responsible in our operations.

# STRATEGIC PLANNING

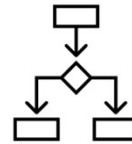
Four key focal points to build the Strategic Plan



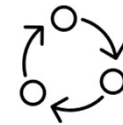
Financial



Customer Perspective



Internal Process



Learning & Growth

## 2024 GOALS

### 3 TO 5 YEAR PLANNING

- #1: Work Order System  
& Continuous Improvement Plan
- #2: Training Programs
- #3: Ensure Safe Drinking Water for All
- #4: Website Update
- #5: Identify additional cost  
sharing/internal – governmental  
opportunities



# EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT

See the Handout of the Executive Director's Report.

- Monthly progress reporting with discussion as needed.

Annual Review and Update to the Strategic Plan:

- The planning and reporting is being developed, it's new to GLSWA and we expect to make adjustments as we go.

FINANCES, BUDGETS,  
& RATE SETTING

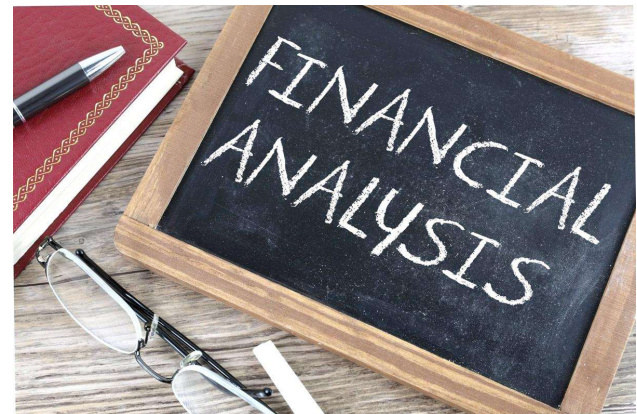
# GLSWA FINANCIAL POLICIES

- Investment Policy
- Fixed Asset Policy



# MONTHLY FINANCIALS

- Revenues and Expense
  - How we are performing compared to budget.
- Trial Balance
  - Bank Balances and Loan Balances.
- Check Register
  - Monthly checks issued.
- Cash Flow
  - Actual and projects for the current fiscal year.



## BUDGET, RATE SETTING & APPROVAL PROCESS.

- A budget is created by making assumptions on operating expenses and capital needs.
- Rates are set based on the needs of operating expenses, capital spending and savings needs.
- Budget options will be brought to the January Board Meeting.

Q&A

Please take a few minutes  
to fill out the survey  
and tell us how we did.

Thank you for attention  
and future participation!