



# Executive Governance Summary

DRAFT

## Brown's Creek Watershed District

Stillwater, Minnesota

For the year ended December 31, 2024



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NEED DATE

Management and Board of Managers  
Browns Creek Watershed District  
Stillwater, Minnesota

We have audited the financial statements of the governmental activities and each major fund of the Browns Creek Watershed District (the District), Stillwater, Minnesota, for the year ended December 31, 2024. Professional standards require that we provide you with information about our responsibilities under generally accepted auditing standards, as well as certain information related to the planned scope and timing of our audit. We have communicated such information in our letter to you dated January 14, 2025. Professional standards also require that we communicate to you the following information related to our audit.

### **Our Responsibility Under Auditing Standards Generally Accepted in the United States of America**

As stated in our engagement letter, our responsibility, as described by professional standards, is to express opinions about whether the financial statements prepared by management with your oversight are fairly presented, in all material respects, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Our audit of the financial statements does not relieve you or management of your responsibilities.

Our responsibility is to plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable, but not absolute, assurance that the financial statements are free of material misstatement. As part of our audit, we considered the internal control over financial reporting of the District. Such considerations were solely for the purpose of determining our audit procedures and not to provide any assurance concerning such internal control over financial reporting. We are responsible for communicating significant matters related to the audit that are, in our professional judgment, relevant to your responsibilities in overseeing the financial reporting process. However, we are not required to design procedures specifically to identify such matters.

### **Significant Audit Findings**

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered the District's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinions on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the District's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the District's internal control.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section 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 were not identified. We did identify certain deficiencies in internal control below as item 2024-001 which we consider to be a significant deficiency.

*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 that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented or detected and corrected on a timely basis. A *significant deficiency* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses may exist that have not been identified.

<u>Finding</u>	<u>Description</u>
<b>2024-001</b>	<b>Preparation of Financial Statements</b>
<i>Condition:</i>	We were requested to draft the audited financial statements and related footnote disclosures as part of our regular audit services. Ultimately, it is management's responsibility to provide for the preparation of your statements and footnotes, and the responsibility of the auditor to determine the fairness of presentation of those statements. However, based on auditing standards, it is our responsibility to inform you that this deficiency could result in a material misstatement to the financial statements that could have been prevented or detected by your management. Essentially, the auditors cannot be part of your internal control process.
<i>Criteria:</i>	Internal controls should be in place to provide reasonable assurance over financial reporting.
<i>Cause:</i>	From a practical standpoint, we both prepare the statements and determine the fairness of the presentation at the same time in connection with our audit. This is not unusual for us to do with organizations of your size.
<i>Effect:</i>	The effectiveness of the internal control system relies on enforcement by management. The effect of deficiencies in internal controls can result in undetected errors in financial reporting.
<i>Recommendation:</i>	It is your responsibility to make the ultimate decision to accept this degree of risk associated with this condition because of cost and other considerations. We have instructed management to review a draft of the auditor prepared financials in detail for accuracy; we have answered any questions that management might have and have encouraged research of any accounting guidance in connection with the adequacy and appropriateness of classification of disclosures in your statements. We are satisfied that the appropriate steps have been taken to provide you with the completed financial statements. While the District is reviewing the financial statements, we recommend a disclosure checklist is utilized to ensure all required disclosures are presented and the District should agree its financial software to the numbers reported in the financial statements.

*Management Response:*

For now, the District's management accepts the degree of risk associated with this condition and thoroughly reviews a draft of the financial statements.

**Compliance and Other Matters**

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the District's financial statements are free of material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, grant agreements, and other matters noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the financial statements. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit. The results of our tests disclosed one instance of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported in accordance with Minnesota statutes.



<u>Finding</u>	<u>Description</u>
<b>2024-002</b>	<b>Long Outstanding Checks</b>
<i>Condition:</i>	The District had 7 outstanding checks, dated prior to December 31, 2021. The total amount of these checks is \$3,128 and date back to 2015.
<i>Criteria:</i>	Minnesota statute §348.38 subdivision 3 states that all intangible personal property held for the owner by any government or political subdivision or agency, which has remained unclaimed by the owner for more than three years is presumed abandoned and is reportable pursuant to section §345.41 if it meets certain criteria.
<i>Cause:</i>	The District had old outstanding checks which fit the above criteria.
<i>Effect:</i>	At year end, the District was not in compliance with Minnesota statute.
<i>Recommendation:</i>	We recommend that the District review their list of outstanding checks each month for any being uncashed over the required time period. If a long outstanding check is found, have it delivered to the state Commissioner of Commerce.

*Management Response:*

Management will work with the auditors to correctly record and follow the statute.

**Qualitative Aspects of Accounting Practices**

Management is responsible for the selection and use of appropriate accounting policies. The significant accounting policies used by the District are described in Note 1 to the financial statements. There were no new requirements adopted for the year ended December 31, 2024. The application of existing policies was not changed during the year. We noted no transactions entered into by the District during the year for which there is a lack of authoritative guidance or consensus. All significant transactions have been recognized in the financial statements in the proper period.

Accounting estimates are an integral part of the financial statements prepared by management and are based on management's knowledge and experience about past and current events and assumptions about future events. Certain accounting estimates are particularly sensitive because of their significance to the financial statements and because of the possibility that future events affecting them may differ significantly from those expected. The most sensitive estimates affecting the financial statements include depreciation on capital assets.

- Management's estimate of depreciation is based on estimated useful lives of the assets. Depreciation is calculated using the straight-line method.

We evaluated the key factors and assumptions used to develop these estimates in determining that they are reasonable in relation to the financial statements taken as a whole. The disclosures in the financial statements are neutral, consistent, and clear. Certain financial statement disclosures are particularly sensitive because of their significance to financial statement users.

**Difficulties Encountered in Performing the Audit**

We encountered no significant difficulties in dealing with management in performing our audit.



## **Corrected and Uncorrected Misstatements**

Professional standards require us to accumulate all known and likely misstatements identified during the audit, other than those that are trivial, and communicate them to the appropriate level of management. Management has corrected all such misstatements. In addition, none of the misstatements detected as a result of audit procedures and corrected by management were material, either individually or in the aggregate, to the financial statements taken as a whole.

We also assisted in preparing a number of year-end accounting entries. These were necessary to adjust the District's records at year end to correct ending balances. The District will receive better more timely information if the preparation of year-end entries is completed internally.

## **Disagreements with Management**

For purposes of this letter, professional standards define a disagreement with management as a financial accounting, reporting, or auditing matter, whether or not resolved to our satisfaction, that could be significant to the financial statements or the auditor's report. We are pleased to report that no such disagreements arose during the course of our audit.

## **Management Representations**

We have requested certain representations from management that are included in the management representation letter dated NEED DATE.

## **Management Consultations with Other Independent Accountants**

In some cases, management may decide to consult with other accountants about auditing and accounting matters, similar to obtaining a "second opinion" on certain situations. If a consultation involves application of an accounting principle to the District's financial statements or a determination of the type of auditor's opinion that may be expressed on those statements, our professional standards require the consulting accountant to check with us to determine that the consultant has all the relevant facts. To our knowledge, there were no such consultations with other accountants.

## **Other Matters**

We applied certain limited procedures to the required supplementary information (RSI) (Management's Discussion and Analysis, which is information that supplements the basic financial statements. Our procedures consisted of inquiries of management regarding the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We did not audit the RSI and do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the RSI.

We were not engaged to report on the introductory section, which accompanies the financial statements but is not RSI. We did not audit or perform other procedures on this other information, and we do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on it.

## **Other Audit Findings or Issues**

We generally discuss a variety of matters, including the application of accounting principles and auditing standards, with management prior to retention as the District's auditors. However, these discussions occurred in the normal course of our professional relationship and our responses were not a condition to our retention.



## Future Accounting Standard Changes

The following Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statements have been issued and may have an impact on future District financial statements: <sup>(1)</sup>

**GASB Statement No. 102** – *Certain Risk Disclosures* Effective: 12/31/2025

**GASB Statement No. 103** – *Financial Reporting Model Improvements* Effective: 12/31/2026

**GASB Statement No. 104** – *Disclosure of Certain Capital Assets* Effective: 12/31/2026

Further information on upcoming [GASB pronouncements](#).

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## Restriction on Use

This purpose of this communication is solely for the information and use of the Board and management of the Watershed District and is not intended to be, and should not be used by anyone other than those specified parties.

Our audit would not necessarily disclose all weaknesses in the system because it was based on selected tests of the accounting records and related data. The comments and recommendations in the report are purely constructive in nature, and should be read in this context.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss any of the items contained in this letter, please feel free to contact us at your convenience. We wish to thank you for the continued opportunity to be of service and for the courtesy and cooperation extended to us by your staff.

**Abdo**  
Minneapolis, Minnesota  
NEED DATE

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