



To the Honorable Members of Town Council
Town of Ashland, Virginia
Ashland, Virginia

In connection with our audit of the financial statements of the Town of Ashland, Virginia (Town) for the year ended June 30, 2017, we have the following comments and suggestions for your consideration.

Reconciliations of Accounts

Accounts should be reconciled to the general ledger on a timely basis, and schedules should be maintained to support these reconciliations. When supporting schedules for cash, accounts payable, capital assets, and pension were provided to us for our review, there were instances in which the balances on the schedules did not agree to the balances recorded in the general ledger. Additionally, there were several schedules that were not available when final audit fieldwork commenced as scheduled in August 2017. The errors in supporting schedules and lack of preparedness for audit fieldwork caused delays. We recommend the Town review the existing year-end close process to ensure the accuracy and timeliness of account reconciliations and supporting schedules.

Status of Previous Management Advice

In our letter dated October 5, 2016, we recommended certain improvements in general controls over the information technology environment which the Town has not yet implemented.

New GASB Pronouncements

At June 30, 2017, the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) had issued several statements not yet implemented by the Town. The statements which might impact the Town are as follows:

Statement No. 75, Accounting and Financial Reporting for Postemployment Benefits Other Than Pensions

The objective of this Statement is to improve accounting and financial reporting by state and local governments for postemployment benefits other than pensions (other postemployment benefits or OPEB). This Statement replaces the requirements of Statement No. 45, *Accounting and Financial Reporting by Employers for Postemployment Benefits Other Than Pensions*, as amended, and Statement No. 57, *OPEB Measurements by Agent Employers and Agent Multiple-Employer Plans*, for OPEB. Statement No. 74, *Financial Reporting for Postemployment Benefit Plans Other Than Pension Plans*, establishes new accounting and financial reporting requirements for OPEB plans.

The scope of this Statement includes OPEB plans – defined benefit and defined contribution – administered through trusts that meet the following criteria:

- Contributions from employers and nonemployer contributing entities to the OPEB plan and earnings on those contributions are irrevocable.
- OPEB plan assets are dedicated to providing OPEB to plan members in accordance with the benefit terms.
- OPEB plan assets are legally protected from the creditors of employers, nonemployer contributing entities, and the OPEB plan administrator. If the plan is a defined benefit OPEB plan, plan assets also are legally protected from creditors of the plan members.

This Statement also includes requirements to address financial reporting for assets accumulated for purposes of providing defined benefit OPEB through OPEB plans that are not administered through trusts that meet the specified criteria.

The requirements of Statement No. 75 are effective for financial statements for fiscal years beginning after June 15, 2017.

GASB Statement No. 83, *Certain Asset Retirement Obligations*

This Statement addresses accounting and financial reporting for certain asset retirement obligations (ARO). An ARO is a legally enforceable liability associated with the retirement of a tangible capital asset. A government that has legal obligations to perform future asset retirement activities related to its tangible assets should recognize a liability based on the guidance in this Statement.

This Statement will enhance comparability of financial statements among governments by establishing uniform criteria for governments to recognize and measure certain AROs, including obligations that may not have been previously reported. This Statement will also enhance the decision-usefulness of the information provided to financial statement users by requiring disclosures related to those AROs.

The requirements of Statement No. 83 are effective for financial statements for fiscal years beginning after June 15, 2018.

GASB Statement No. 84, *Fiduciary Activities*

The objective of this Statement is to improve guidance regarding the identification of fiduciary activities for accounting and financial reporting purposes and how those activities should be reported. The focus of the criteria generally is on (1) whether a government is controlling the assets of the fiduciary activity and (2) the beneficiaries with whom a fiduciary relationship exists.

An activity meeting the criteria should be reported in a fiduciary fund in the basic financial statements. Governments with activities meeting the criteria should present a statement of fiduciary net position and a statement of changes in fiduciary net position. An exception to that requirement is provided for a business-type activity that normally expects to hold custodial assets for three months or less.

The requirements of this Statement will enhance consistency and comparability by (1) establishing specific criteria for identifying activities that should be reported as fiduciary activities and (2) clarifying whether and how business-type activities should report their fiduciary activities. Greater consistency and comparability enhances the value provided by the information reported in financial statements for assessing government accountability and stewardship.

The requirements of Statement No. 84 are effective for financial statements for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2018.

GASB Statement No. 85, *Omnibus 2017*

The objective of this Statement is to address practice issues that have been identified during implementation and application of certain GASB Statements. This Statement addresses a variety of topics including issues related to blending component units, goodwill, fair value measurement and application, and postemployment benefits (pensions and OPEB).

The requirements of this Statement will enhance consistency in the application of accounting and financial reporting requirements. Consistent reporting will improve the usefulness of information for users of the County's financial statements.

The requirements of Statement No. 85 are effective for financial statements for fiscal years beginning after June 15, 2017.

GASB Statement No. 87, *Leases*

The objective of this Statement is to better meet the information needs of financial statement users by improving accounting and financial reporting for leases by governments. This Statement increases the usefulness of governments' financial statements by requiring recognition of certain lease assets and liabilities for leases that previously were classified as operating leases and recognized as inflows of resources or outflows of resources based on the payment provisions of the contract. 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. A lease is defined as a contract that conveys control of the right to use another entity's nonfinancial asset as specified in the contract for a period of time in an exchange or exchange-like transaction. Examples of nonfinancial assets include buildings, land, vehicles, and equipment. Any contract that meets this definition should be accounted for under the leases guidance, unless specifically excluded in this Statement.

The requirements of Statement No. 87 are effective for financial statements for fiscal years beginning after December 15, 2019.

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This report is intended solely for the information and use of management, Town Council and others within the Town. It is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

If you have any questions concerning any of these items or if we can be of further assistance, please contact us. We thank you for the opportunity to conduct your audit for the year ended June 30, 2017 and express our appreciation to everyone for their cooperation during this engagement.

PBmares, LLP

Harrisonburg, Virginia
November 1, 2017