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September 8, 2022

Board of Directors  
Harris County Municipal  
Utility District No. 136  
Harris County, Texas

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements of Harris County Municipal Utility District No. 136 (the "District") as of and for the year ended March 31, 2022, in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, we considered the District's internal control over financial reporting ("internal control") as a basis for designing our auditing procedures for the purpose of expressing our opinion 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 preceding paragraph and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be significant deficiencies or material weaknesses and therefore, there can be no assurance that all deficiencies, significant deficiencies, or material weaknesses have been identified.

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 of the District's financial statements 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.

Last year, and again this year, we observed the following deficiencies in the District's internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses.

## **Material Weaknesses**

The District's management consists of an elected Board of Directors (the "Directors"). The day-to-day operations are performed by private companies ("Consultants") under contract with the District. The Directors of the District supervise the performance of the Consultants; however, although the Consultants can be part of the District's system of internal control, the Consultants are not members of management. Ultimately, the Directors of the District are responsible for the design and implementation of the system of internal control.

As is common within the system of internal control of most small organizations, the accounting function of the District does not include preparation of the financial statements complete with footnotes in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Accordingly, the District has not established internal controls over the preparation of its financial statements. This condition is considered to be a material weakness of the District's system of internal control over financial reporting.

### **Material Weaknesses (Continued)**

During the course of performing an audit, the auditor prepared various journal entries to present the financial statements on the government-wide basis of accounting. Management's reliance upon the auditor to detect and make these necessary adjustments is considered to be a material weakness in internal control. In addition, the District's Management relies on the District's auditor to prepare the capital asset and depreciation schedules and post adjustments related to the presentation of the capital assets in the government-wide financial statements. This reliance on the auditor to perform this function is considered to be a material weakness in the system of internal control. Auditing standards do not make exceptions for reporting deficiencies that are adequately mitigated with nonaudit services rendered by the auditor or deficiencies for which the remedy would be cost prohibitive.

We agree with the objective of auditing standards to inform an organization of all the conditions in its internal control that interfere with its ability to record financial data reliably and issue financial statements free of material misstatement. Communication of the material weaknesses above helps to emphasize that the responsibility for financial reporting rests entirely with the organization and not the auditor.

### **Management's Response**

The District responds that the auditor's Management Letter, and the material weaknesses, significant deficiencies, and/or the control deficiencies identified therein, are prepared in response to Statement on Auditing Standards No. 115 ("SAS 115") and are not prompted by any other circumstances identified during the course of the audit and disclosed to the District's Board of Directors ("Board").

As you know, the Board has, since inception of the District, engaged the auditor to perform the District's audit and to prepare the financial statements and capital asset and depreciation schedules upon which the audit is based. It is our understanding that this is the usual and customary practice for smaller special districts in Texas, as it is more cost effective to engage consultants to perform such services than to employ persons (who would constitute district management) to perform same. It is also the Board's understanding that, under the requirements of SAS 115, the engagement of the auditor to perform these services resulted in the Management Letter because (1) the Board members are not able to prevent, detect, and correct a misstatement in the preparation of the District's financial statements or its capital asset and depreciation schedules or to make adjustments to same, and (2) the Board has not implemented controls to prevent, detect, and correct a misstatement in the preparation of the District's financial statements or capital assets and depreciation schedules, such as the hiring of an employee or the engagement of another consultant to prepare the District's financial statements and capital asset and depreciation schedules.

With respect to items (1) and (2) identified above, the Board responds that its members are appointed or elected in accordance with the requirements set forth in the Texas Water Code, and that such members do not necessarily have the ability to prevent, detect, and correct a misstatement in the preparation of the District's financial statements or its capital asset and depreciation schedules or to make adjustments to same.

Further, the Board responds that it is a small government unit and that it engages the auditor based upon the auditor's professional qualifications, and in light of such qualifications, does not feel that the addition at this time of an employee or the engagement of a consultant to prepare the District's financial statements and capital asset and depreciation schedules (as a form of control) would be cost effective. Additionally, the Board adds that the District does not have any employees, but rather engages consultants who possess industry knowledge and expertise to provide financial services, including its bookkeeper, auditor, and financial advisor, as well as consultants that provide legal, engineering, and operation and maintenance services. In particular, the District's bookkeeper presents periodic financial information (unaudited) to the Board for review, which information generally reflects income, disbursements, adjustments, and the status of investments relative to the District's various accounts.

**Conclusion**

Management's written response to the material weaknesses identified in our audit has not been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements, and accordingly, we express no opinion on it.

This communication is intended solely for the information and use of the Board of Directors and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

Sincerely,

McCall Gibson Swedlund Barfoot PLLC  
Certified Public Accountants  
Houston, Texas

DRAFT SUBJECT TO CHANGE