



December 12, 2017

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Attention: S. Michael Rummel, Finance and Administrative Committee Chair

This letter is intended to communicate certain matters related to the planned scope and timing of our audit of Lake County's financial statements and compliance as of and for the year ending November 30, 2017.

### **Communication**

Effective two-way communication between our Firm and the County Board and Finance and Administrative Committee is important to understanding matters related to the audit and developing a constructive working relationship.

Your insights may assist us in understanding Lake County and its environment, identifying appropriate sources of audit evidence and providing information about specific transactions or events. We will discuss with you your oversight of the effectiveness of internal control and any areas where you request additional procedures to be undertaken. We expect that you will timely communicate to us any matters you consider relevant to the audit. Such matters might include strategic decisions that may significantly affect the nature, timing and extent of audit procedures, your suspicion or detection of fraud or abuse, or any concerns you may have about the integrity or competence of senior management.

We will timely communicate to you any fraud involving senior management and other fraud that causes a material misstatement of the financial statements, illegal acts, instances of noncompliance, or abuse that come to our attention (unless they are clearly inconsequential), and disagreements with management and other serious difficulties encountered in performing the audit. We also will communicate to you [and to management] any significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in internal control that become known to us during the course of the audit. Other matters arising from the audit that are, in our professional judgment, significant and relevant to you in your oversight of the financial reporting process will be communicated to you in writing after the audit.

### **Independence**

Our independence policies and procedures are designed to provide reasonable assurance that our firm and its personnel comply with applicable professional independence standards. Our policies address financial interests, business and family relationships, and non-audit services that may be thought to bear on independence. For example, without our permission no partner or professional employee of RSM US LLP is permitted to have any direct financial interest or a material indirect financial interest in a client or any affiliate of a client. Also, if an immediate family member or close relative of a partner or professional employee is employed by a client in a key position, the incident must be reported and resolved in accordance with firm policy. In addition, our policies restrict certain non-audit services that may be provided by RSM US LLP and require audit clients to accept certain responsibilities in connection with the provision of permitted non-attest services.

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### **The Audit Planning Process**

Our audit approach places a strong emphasis on obtaining an understanding of how your entity functions. This enables us to identify key audit components and tailor our procedures to the unique aspects of your operations. The development of a specific audit plan will begin by meeting with you and with management to obtain an understanding of business objectives, strategies, risks and performance.

As part of obtaining an understanding of your organization and its environment, we will obtain an understanding of internal control. We will use this understanding to identify risks of material misstatement and noncompliance, which will provide us with a basis for designing and implementing responses to the assessed risks of material misstatement and noncompliance. We will also obtain an understanding of the users of the financial statements in order to establish an overall materiality level for audit purposes. We will conduct formal discussions among engagement team members to consider how and where your financial statements might be susceptible to material misstatement due to fraud or error or to instances of noncompliance, including abuse.

### **Group Audit Considerations**

Group management (County management) is responsible for the financial statements of the County. Auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS) address the group auditor's responsibility for group financial statements including the work of component auditors. We are the group auditor.

Group management has informed us that another auditor will be auditing the Lake County Forest Preserves and the Clerk of the Circuit Court Agency Fund. Due to our familiarity with the component auditor, we plan to refer to the other auditor in our report on the group financial statements for the entities listed above. We will confirm various items with the component auditor including their independence, the basis of accounting, restrictions on the use of the report and other items as we deem necessary. We will review the reports provided by the component auditor and we will communicate with County management any items that raise a concern about the quality or completeness of the component's work.

The timely completion of the group audit is dependent on group management's ability to coordinate with and facilitate our access to component management and component auditors throughout the group audit process.

### **The Concept of Materiality in Planning and Executing the Audit**

We apply the concept of materiality in both planning and performing the audit, evaluating the effect of identified misstatements or noncompliance on the audit and the effect of uncorrected misstatements, if any, on the financial statements, forming the opinion in our report on the financial statements, and determining or reporting in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and other compliance reporting requirements. Our determination of materiality is a matter of professional judgment and is affected by our perception of the financial information needs of users of the financial statements. We establish performance materiality at an amount less than materiality for the financial statements as a whole to allow for the risk of misstatements that may not be detected by the audit. We use performance materiality for purposes of assessing the risks of material misstatement and determining the nature, timing and extent of further audit procedures. Our assessment of materiality throughout the audit will be based on both quantitative and qualitative considerations. Because of the interaction of quantitative and qualitative considerations, misstatements of a relatively small amount could have a material effect on the current financial statements as well as financial statements of future periods. We will accumulate misstatements identified during the audit, other than those that are clearly trivial. At the end of the audit, we will inform you of all individual uncorrected misstatements aggregated by us in connection with our evaluation of our audit test results.

### **Our Approach to Internal Control and Compliance Relevant to the Audit**

Our audit of the financial statements, including compliance, will include obtaining an understanding of internal control sufficient to plan the audit and determine the nature, timing and extent of audit procedures to be performed. An audit is not designed to provide assurance on internal control or identify significant deficiencies or material weaknesses. Our review and understanding of the entity's internal control is not undertaken for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control.

We will issue reports on internal control related to the financial statements and major programs. These reports describe the scope of testing of internal control and the results of our tests of internal control. Our reports on internal control will include any significant deficiencies and material weaknesses in the system of which we become aware as a result of obtaining an understanding of internal control and performing tests of internal control consistent with the requirements of *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, the Single Audit Act, and *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* at 2 CFR 200 (Uniform Guidance).

We will issue reports on compliance with laws, regulations, and the provisions of contracts or grant agreements. We will report on any noncompliance that could have a material effect on the financial statements and any noncompliance that could have a direct and material effect on each major program. Our reports on compliance will address material errors, fraud, abuse, violations of compliance requirements, and other responsibilities imposed by state and federal statutes and regulations and assumed contracts; and any state or federal grant, entitlement or loan program questioned costs of which we become aware, consistent with the requirements of the standards identified above.

### **Timing of the Audit**

We have scheduled preliminary audit field work for the weeks of December 18, 2017 and January 15, 2018 through January 29, 2018, with final field work commencing the week of March 5, 2018. Management's adherence to its closing schedule and timely completion of information used by us in performance of the audit is essential to timely completion of the audit.

### **Closing**

We will be pleased to respond to any questions you have about the foregoing. We appreciate the opportunity to be of service to Lake County.

This communication is intended solely for the information and use of the County Board and Finance and Administrative Committee and is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than this specified party.

*RSM US LLP*