

August 7, 2025

VIA EMAIL:

Monica.Mitchell@myclearwater.com

Monica D. Mitchell, Assistant Finance Director
City of Clearwater
100 S. Myrtle Avenue
Clearwater, Florida 33756-5220

Dear Ms. Mitchell:

This engagement letter between City of Clearwater (hereafter referred to as the "City" or "you" or "your" or "management") and Cherry Bekaert LLP (the "Firm" or "Cherry Bekaert" or "we" or "us" or "our") sets forth the nature and scope of the services we will provide, the City's required involvement and assistance in support of our services, the related fee arrangements, and other Terms and Conditions, which are attached hereto and incorporated by reference, designed to facilitate the performance of our professional services and to achieve the mutually agreed-upon objectives of the City.

Summary of services

We will provide the following services to the City as of and for the year ended September 30, 2025:

Audit and attestation services

1. We will audit the financial statements of the City as of and for the year ended September 30, 2025 including the governmental activities, the business type activities, each major fund and the aggregate remaining fund information, including the disclosures. We will also audit the financial statements of each of the City's non-major governmental, non-major enterprise, internal service and fiduciary funds presented as supplementary information, as defined by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, in the accompanying combining and individual fund financial statements as of and for the year ended September 30, 2025.
2. We will audit the schedule of expenditures of federal awards and state financial assistance. As part of our engagement we will apply certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America.
3. We will read the introductory section, statistical section, and other information (continuing disclosure and fire services program) accompanying the financial statements and consider whether a material inconsistency exists between the other information and the financial statements. In addition, we will remain alert for indications that a material inconsistency exists between the other information and knowledge obtained in the audit, or if such information contains a material misstatement of fact or is otherwise misleading. If based on the work performed, we conclude that an uncorrected material misstatement of the other information exists, we are required to describe it in our report.
4. We will apply limited procedures to the City's management's discussion and analysis (MD&A) required supplemental information - pension trust funds and other

postemployment benefits and the combining and individual fund statements and schedules), which will consist of inquiries of City's management about the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the financial statements.

5. We will examine the City's compliance with the requirements of Section 218.416, Florida Statutes, during the City's fiscal year ended September 30, 2025. Our examination will be conducted in accordance with the attestation standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Accordingly, it will include test of your records and other procedures we consider necessary to enable us to express an opinion as to whether the City complied, in all material respects, with the aforementioned requirements.
6. We will audit the special purpose Schedule of Revenues and Expenditures of the Emergency Medical Services Department of the City (the "schedule"), and render an opinion whether the schedule presents fairly, in all material respects, the revenues and expenditures related to the Emergency Medical Services of the City in accordance with the requirements of the ALS First Responder Agreement.
7. We will audit the City of Clearwater Community Redevelopment Agency ("CRA") as of and for the year ended September 30, 2025, including the governmental activities and each major fund.
8. We will apply limited procedures to the CRA's management discussion and analysis (MD&A), will consist of inquiries of the City's management about the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the financial statements.

Nonattest accounting and other services

We will provide the following additional services:

1. Complete the appropriate sections of and sign the Data Collection Form.

Examination services

Our examination will be conducted in accordance with attestation standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants ("AICPA"). Accordingly, it will include examining, on a test basis, your records and other procedures to obtain evidence necessary to enable us to express our opinion. We will issue a written report upon completion of our examination. We cannot provide assurance that an unmodified opinion will be expressed. Circumstances may arise in which it is necessary for us to modify our opinion. If our opinion is other than unmodified, we will discuss the reasons with you in advance. If, for any reason, we are unable to complete the examinations or are unable to form or have not formed an opinion, we may decline to express an opinion or may withdraw from the engagement.

Because of the inherent limitations of an examination engagement, together with the inherent limitations of internal control, an unavoidable risk exists that some material misstatements may not be detected, even though the examination is properly planned and performed in accordance with attestation standards.

We will plan and perform an examination to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the assertion is free from material misstatement. Our engagement will not include a detailed inspection of every item supporting each assertion and cannot be relied upon to disclose all material errors, or known and suspected fraud or noncompliance with laws or regulations, or internal control deficiencies that may exist. However, we will inform you of any known or suspected fraud and noncompliance with the laws and regulations, internal control deficiencies identified during the engagement, and uncorrected misstatements that come to our attention unless clearly trivial.

We understand that you provide us with the information required for our examinations and that you are responsible for the accuracy and completeness of that information. We may advise you about appropriate criteria, but the responsibility for the subject matter remains with you.

You are also responsible for making all management decisions and performing all management functions; for designating an individual who possesses suitable skill, knowledge, or experience to oversee the services we provide; and for evaluating the adequacy and results of those services and accepting responsibility for them.

Your expectations

Our services plan, which includes our audit plan, is designed to provide a foundation for an effective, efficient, and quality-focused approach to accomplish the engagement objectives and meet or exceed the City's expectations. Our services plan will be reviewed with you periodically and will serve as a benchmark against which you will be able to measure our performance. Any additional services that you may request, and that we agree to provide, will be the subject of separate written arrangements.

The City recognizes that our professional standards require that we be independent from the City in our examination, and audit of the City's financial statements and our accompanying reports in order to ensure that our objectivity and professional skepticism have not been compromised. As a result, we cannot enter into a fiduciary relationship with the City and the City should not expect that we will act only with due regard to the City's interest in the performance of this audit, and the City should not impose on us special confidence that we will conduct this audit with only the City's interest in mind. Because of our obligation to be

independent of the City, no fiduciary relationship will be created by this engagements or audit of the City's financial statements.

The engagement will be led by Lauren Strobe, who will be responsible for assuring the overall quality, value, and timeliness of the services provided to you.

Audit and attestation services

Our audit will be conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America; and the standards for financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; the provisions of Title 2 U.S. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards ("Uniform Guidance"); the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996; Chapter 10.550, Rules of the Auditor General of the State of Florida ("Chapter 10.550") Florida Single Audit Act. The objective of our audit is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the City's financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion(s) about whether the City's financial statements are presented fairly, in all material respects, in conformity with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles and to report on the fairness of the additional information referred to in the Summary of Services section when considered in relation to the financial statements taken as a whole. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS and *Government Auditing Standards* will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements, including omissions, can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment of a reasonable user made based on the financial statements in conformity with the basis of accounting noted above. The objective also includes reporting on:

- Internal control over financial reporting and compliance with the provisions of applicable laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a material effect on the financial statements in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*.
- Internal control over compliance related to major programs and an opinion (or disclaimer of opinion) on compliance with laws, regulations and the provisions of contracts or grant agreements that could have a direct and material effect on each major program in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 and the Uniform Guidance and the Florida Single Audit Act and Chapter 10.550.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We will conduct our audit in accordance with GAAS and the standards for financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States and will include tests of accounting records, a determination of major programs in accordance with Uniform Guidance and the Florida Single Audit Act and Chapter 10.550, and other procedures as deemed necessary to enable us to express such an opinion or opinions about whether the financial statements are fairly presented, in all material respects, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America ("GAAP"). We will also:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Obtain an understanding of the City and its environment, including internal control relevant to the audit, sufficient to identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to error or fraud, and to design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion(s). The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentation, or the override of internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management. We will also evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstance, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the City's internal control. However, we will communicate to you in writing concerning any significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in internal control relevant to the audit of the financial statements that we have identified during the audit.
- Conclude, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the City's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

Nonattest accounting and other services

In connection with any of the audit, accounting, or other services noted below, we will provide a copy of all schedules or other support for you to maintain as part of your books and records supporting your financial statements. You agree to take responsibility for all documents provided by Cherry Bekaert and will retain copies based on your needs and document retention policies. By providing these documents to you, you confirm that Cherry Bekaert is not responsible for hosting your records or maintaining custody of your records or data and that Cherry Bekaert is not providing business continuity or disaster recovery services. You confirm you are responsible for maintaining internal controls over your books and records including business continuity and disaster recovery alternatives. In addition, any documents provided to Cherry Bekaert by the City in connection with these services will be considered to be copies and will not be retained by Cherry Bekaert after completion of the accounting and other services. You are expected to retain anything you upload to a Cherry Bekaert portal and are responsible for downloading and retaining anything we upload in a timely manner. Portals are only meant as a method of transferring data, are not intended for the storage of client information, and may be deleted at any time. You are expected to maintain control over your accounting systems to include the licensing of applications and the hosting of said applications and data. We do not provide electronic security or back-up services for any of your data or records. Giving us access to your accounting system does not make us hosts of information contained within.

The accounting and other services described in this section are nonaudit services, which do not constitute audit services under *Government Auditing Standards*, and such services will not be conducted in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*. We will perform the services in accordance with applicable professional standards. We, in our sole professional judgment, reserve the right to refuse to perform any procedure or take any action that could be construed as assuming City's management responsibilities.

In conjunction with providing these accounting and other services, we may use third party software or templates created by Cherry Bekaert for use on third party software. Management expressly agrees that the City has obtained no rights to use such software or templates and that Cherry Bekaert's use of the City's data in those applications is not deemed to be hosting, maintaining custody, providing business continuity, or disaster recovery services.

Data collection form

We will complete the appropriate sections of and sign the Data Collection Form that summarizes our audit findings. We will provide copies of our reports to the City; however, it is the City's management's responsibility to submit the reporting package (including financial statements, schedule of expenditures of federal awards and state financial assistance, summary schedule of prior audit findings, auditors' reports, and corrective action plan) along with the Data Collection Form to the designated federal audit clearinghouse and, if appropriate, to pass-through entities. The Data Collection Form and the reporting package must be submitted within the earlier of 30 days after receipt of the auditors' reports or nine months after the end of the audit period.

City's management responsibilities related to accounting and other services

For all nonattest services we perform in connection with the engagement, you are responsible for designating a competent employee to oversee the services, make any management decisions, perform any management functions related to the services, evaluate the adequacy of the services, retain relevant copies supporting your books and records, and accept overall responsibility for the results of the services.

Prior to the release of the report, the City's management will need to sign a representation letter acknowledging its responsibility for the results of these services, and acknowledging receipt of all appropriate copies.

City's management responsibilities related to the audit

The City's management is responsible for (1) designing, implementing, and maintaining internal controls, including internal controls over federal awards and state financial assistance, and for evaluating and monitoring ongoing activities, relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to help ensure that appropriate goals and objectives are met; (2) following laws and regulations; (3) ensuring that there is reasonable assurance that government programs are administered in compliance with compliance requirements; and (4) ensuring that the City's management and financial information is reliable and properly reported. The City's management is also responsible for implementing systems designed to achieve compliance with applicable laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements. You

are also responsible for the selection and application of accounting principles; for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements, schedule of expenditures of federal awards and state financial assistance and all accompanying information in conformity with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles; and for compliance with applicable laws and regulations (including federal and state statutes) and the provisions of contracts and grant agreements (including award agreements). Your responsibilities also include identifying significant contractor relationship in which the contractor has responsibility for program compliance and for the accuracy and completeness of that information.

The City's management is responsible for making all financial records and related information available to us, including additional information that is requested for purposes of the audit (including information from outside of the general and subsidiary ledgers), and for the accuracy and completeness of that information. You are also responsible for providing us with (1) access to all information of which it is aware that is relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements, such as records, documentation, identification of all related parties and all related-party relationships and transactions, and other matters, (2) access to personnel, accounts, books, records, supporting documentation, and other information as needed to perform an audit under the Uniform Guidance and the Florida Single Audit Act, Chapter 10,550, (3) additional information that we may request for the purpose of the audit and (4) unrestricted access to persons within the City from whom we determine it necessary to obtain audit evidence.

Your responsibilities include adjusting the financial statements to correct material misstatements and for confirming to us in the written representation letter that the effects of any uncorrected misstatements aggregated by us during the current engagement and pertaining to the latest period presented are immaterial, both individually and in the aggregate, to the financial statements taken as a whole.

You are responsible for the design and implementation of programs and controls to prevent and detect fraud, and for informing us about all known or suspected fraud affecting the City involving (1) the City's management, (2) employees who have significant roles in internal control, and (3) others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements. Your responsibilities include informing us of your knowledge of any allegations of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the City received in communications from employees, former employees, grantors, regulators, or other. In addition, you are responsible for identifying and ensuring that the City complies with applicable laws, regulations contracts, agreements, and grants and for taking timely and appropriate steps to remedy fraud and noncompliance with provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, or grant agreements that we report. Additionally, as required by the Uniform Guidance and the Florida Single Audit Act, Chapter 10.550, it is the City's management's responsibility to evaluate and monitor noncompliance with federal and state statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of federal and state awards and state financial assistance; take prompt action when instances of noncompliance are identified including noncompliance identified in audit findings; promptly follow up and take corrective action on reported audit findings; and prepare a summary schedule of prior audit findings and a separate corrective action plan.

The City's management is responsible for identifying all federal awards and state financial assistance received and understanding and complying with the compliance requirements and for the preparation of the schedule of expenditures of federal awards (including notes and noncash assistance received, and COVID-19 related concepts, such as lost revenues, if applicable) and state financial assistance in conformity with the Uniform Guidance and the Florida Single Audit Act, and Chapter 10.550. You agree to include our report on the schedule of expenditures of federal awards and state financial assistance in any document

that contains and indicates that we have reported on the schedule of expenditures of federal awards and state financial assistance. You also agree to include the audited financial statements with any presentation of the schedule of expenditures of federal awards and state financial assistance that includes our report thereon or make the audited financial statements readily available to intended users of the schedule of expenditures of federal awards and state financial assistance no later than the date the schedule of expenditures of federal awards and state financial assistance is issued with our report thereon. Your responsibilities include acknowledging to us in the written representation letter that (1) you are responsible for presentation of the schedule of expenditures of federal awards and state financial assistance in accordance with the Uniform Guidance and the Florida Single Audit Act and Chapter 10.550, (2) you believe the schedule of expenditures of federal awards and state financial assistance, including its form and content, is stated fairly in accordance with the Uniform Guidance and the Florida Single Audit Act and Chapter 10.550, (3) the methods of measurement or presentation have not changed from those used in the prior period or, if they have changed, the reasons for such changes), and (4) the City has disclosed to us any significant assumptions or interpretations underlying the measurement or presentation of the schedule of expenditures of federal awards and state financial assistance.

You are responsible for the preparation of the supplementary information, which we have been engaged to report on, in conformity with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles. You agree to include our report on the supplementary information in any document that contains and indicates that we have reported on the supplementary information. You also agree to include the audited financial statements with any presentation of the supplementary information that includes our report thereon. Your responsibilities include acknowledging to us in the written representation letter that (1) you are responsible for presentation of the supplementary information in accordance with GAAP, (2) you believe the supplementary information, including its form and content, is fairly presented in accordance with GAAP, (3) the methods of measurement or presentation have not changed from those used in the prior period (or, if they have changed, the reasons for such changes), and (4) you have disclosed to us any significant assumptions or interpretations underlying the measurement or presentation of the supplementary information.

The City's management is responsible for establishing and maintaining a process for tracking the status of audit findings and recommendations. The City's management is also responsible for identifying and providing report copies of previous financial audits, attestation engagements, performance audits or other studies related to the objectives discussed in the *Audit and attestation services* section of this letter. This responsibility includes relaying to us corrective actions taken to address significant findings and recommendations resulting from those audits, attestation engagements, performance audits, or other studies. You are also responsible for providing City's management views on our current findings, conclusions, and recommendations, as well as your planned corrective actions, for the report, and for the timing and format for providing that information.

The City's management agrees to assume all management responsibilities relating to the financial statements, schedule of expenditures of federal awards and state financial assistance and disclosures, and any other nonaudit services we provide. You will be required to acknowledge in the management representation letter our assistance with preparation of the financial statements, schedule of expenditures of federal awards and state financial assistance and disclosures, and that you have reviewed and approved the financial statements, schedule of expenditures of federal awards and state financial assistance and disclosures prior to their issuance and have accepted responsibility for them. Further, you agree to oversee the nonaudit services by designating an individual, preferably from senior

management, with suitable skill, knowledge, or experience; evaluate the adequacy and results of those services; and accept responsibility for them.

The City's management is responsible for disclosing to us all documents that comprise the annual report and preparation of the annual report. You agree you will provide us with the final version of all documents comprising the annual report prior to the date of the auditor's report so that required audit procedures can be completed prior to the issuance of the auditor's report. If obtaining the final version of these documents is not possible prior to the date of the auditor's report, then the documents will be provided as soon as practicable, and the City will not issue the annual report prior to providing them to the us and allowing sufficient time to apply required audit procedures. If the documents comprising the annual report are provided after the date of the auditor's report and we concluded that there is a material inconsistency or misstatement then we will take appropriate actions which may include communicating the matter to those charged with governance or obtaining legal advice.

City's management's responsibilities related to the examination

The City's management is responsible for:

- Providing us with the information required for our examination and for the accuracy and completeness of that information
- If applicable, the fair presentation of the financial information included in the report in conformity with the acceptable financial framework or the criteria or assertion described on page one of the engagement letter
- If applicable, the selection and application of accounting principles and the consistent application of those principles
- Making all financial or other applicable records and related information available to us
- Ensuring that all material information is disclosed to us
- Granting unrestricted access to persons within the entity from whom we determine it necessary to obtain sufficient evidence to complete our examination
- Identifying and ensuring that the City complies with the laws and regulations applicable to the criteria or assertion described on page one of the engagement letter

The City's management is responsible for informing us of its views regarding the risk of fraud impacting the report at the City. The City's management must inform us of their knowledge of any allegations of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the City received in communications from employees, former employees, regulators, or others and for informing us about all known or suspected fraud affecting the City involving (a) management, (b) employees who have significant roles in internal control, and (c) others where the fraud could have a material effect on the report.

The City's management is responsible for the design, implementation, and maintenance of programs and controls over the report and to prevent and detect fraud. Appropriate supervisory review procedures are necessary to provide reasonable assurance that adopted policies and prescribed procedures are adhered to and to identify errors and fraud or illegal acts.

At the conclusion of the engagement, the City's management will provide to us a representation letter that, among other things, addresses (1) the City's management's responsibilities related to the examination and confirms certain representations made to us

during the examination, including, the City's management's acknowledgement of its responsibility for the design and implementation of programs and controls to prevent and detect fraud; (2) the City's management's responsibilities related to the monitoring of internal control over financial reporting; and (3) the City's management's knowledge, directly or from allegations by others, of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the City.

Reporting

Our report will be addressed to the Honorable Mayor and the City Council Members of the City. Circumstances may arise in which our report may differ from its expected form and content based on the result of our audit. Depending on the nature of these circumstances, it may be necessary for us to modify our opinion or add emphasis-of-matter or other-matter paragraphs to our auditor's report, or if necessary, withdraw from this engagement. If our opinion is other than unmodified, we will discuss the reasons with you in advance. If, for any reason, we are unable to complete the audit or are unable to form or have not formed an opinion, we may decline to express opinions or issue reports, or may withdraw from this engagement.

We will also issue written reports upon completion of our Single Audit. The *Government Auditing Standards* report on internal control over financial reporting and on compliance and other matters will include a paragraph that states that (1) the purpose of the report is solely to describe the scope of testing of internal control and compliance and the result of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the City's internal control or on compliance, and (2) the report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the entity's internal control and compliance. The Uniform Guidance and the Florida Single Audit Act, and Chapter 10.550 report on internal control over compliance will include a paragraph that states that the purpose of the report on internal control over compliance is solely to describe the scope of testing of internal control over compliance and the results of that testing based on the requirements of the Uniform Guidance and the Florida Single Audit Act and Chapter 10.550. Both reports will state that the report is not suitable for any other purpose.

Indemnity

Cherry Bekaert will rely on the City to provide information and representations to us in the performance of our professional services and in consideration of the fees that we will charge. Because of the importance of management's representations to the effective performance of our services, the City will release, indemnify, and hold harmless the Firm and its personnel from any claims, liabilities, costs, and expenses relating to our services under this letter arising in circumstances where there has been a known misrepresentation by an officer or employee of the City.

Nothing contained herein is intended to serve as a waiver by the City of its sovereign immunity, to extend the liability of the City beyond the limits set forth in Section 768.28, Florida Statutes, or be construed as consent by the City to be sued by third parties.

This provision will survive termination of this Letter.

Limitation of damages

In recognition of the relative risks and benefits of this agreement to both the City and Cherry Bekaert, the City agrees, to the fullest extent permitted by law, to limit the damages owed by Cherry Bekaert to the City for any and all liability, claims, losses, and costs, of any nature whatsoever, so that the total aggregate damages payable by Cherry Bekaert to the City shall not exceed the total fees for services rendered under this agreement. Both parties to this agreement intend and agree that this limitation apply to any and all damages or causes of action against Cherry Bekaert, however alleged or arising, unless otherwise prohibited by law, or unless the claimed damages arise due to the gross negligence or willful misconduct of Cherry Bekaert.

Fees

The fees contemplate only the services described in the Summary of Services section of this letter. You may request that we perform additional services not addressed in this engagement letter. If this occurs, we will communicate with you concerning the scope of the additional services and the fees which will be at our standard billing rates noted in the table below. We also may issue a separate engagement letter covering the additional services. In the absence of any other written communication from us documenting such additional services, our services will continue to be governed by the terms of this engagement letter.

Standard Bill Rates

Skill Level	Bill Rate
Partner	\$580
Director	\$510
Senior Manager	\$495
Manager	\$375
Senior Accountant	\$325
Staff Accountant	\$240

The following summarizes the fees for the services described above:

Description of services

Estimated fee

Audit services

Audit of City's financial statements and single audit (federal and state)	\$138,500
Audit of Community Redevelopment Agency	\$8,500
Emergency Medical Services Audit	\$3,000

Nonattest services

Completion of Data Collection Form	Included above
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Total

\$150,000

The fees will be billed periodically. Invoices are due on presentation. A service charge will be added to past due accounts equal to 1.5% per month (18% annually) on the previous month's balance less payments received during the month, with a minimum charge of \$2.00 per month.

If the foregoing is in accordance with your understanding, please sign a copy of this letter in the space provided and return it to us. No change, modification, addition, or amendment to this letter shall be valid unless in writing and signed by all parties. The parties agree that this letter may be electronically signed and that the electronic signatures will be deemed to have the same force and effect as handwritten signatures.

If you have any questions, please email Lauren Strobe at lstrobe@cbh.com.

Sincerely,

CHERRY BEKAERT LLP



City of Clearwater

ACCEPTED BY: _____

TITLE: _____ DATE: _____

Cherry Bekaert LLP Engagement Letter Terms and Conditions

The following terms and conditions are an integral part of the attached engagement letter and should be read in their entirety in conjunction with your review of the letter.

Limitations of the audit report

Should the City wish to include or incorporate by reference the financial statements and our report thereon into *any* other document at some future date, we will consider granting permission to include our report into another such document at the time of the request. However, we may be required by generally accepted auditing standards ("GAAS") to perform certain procedures before we can give our permission to include our report in another document such as an annual report, private placement, regulator filing, official statement, offering of debt securities, etc. You agree that the City will not include or incorporate by reference the financial statements and our report thereon, or our report into any other document without our prior written permission. In addition, to avoid unnecessary delay or misunderstandings, it is important to provide us with timely notice of your intention to issue any such document.

Limitations of the audit process

In conducting the audit, we will perform tests of the accounting records and such other procedures as we consider necessary in the circumstances to provide a reasonable basis for our opinion on the financial statements. We also will assess the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by the City's management, as well as evaluate the overall financial statement presentation.

Our audit will include procedures designed to obtain reasonable assurance of detecting misstatements due to errors or fraud that are material to the financial statements. Absolute assurance is not attainable because of the nature of audit evidence and the characteristics of fraud. For example, audits performed in accordance with GAAS are based on the concept of selective testing of the data being examined and are, therefore, subject to the limitation that material misstatements due to errors or fraud, if they exist, may not be detected. Also, an audit is not designed to detect matters that are immaterial to the financial statements. In addition, an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS does not include procedures specifically designed to detect illegal acts having an indirect effect (e.g., violations of fraud and abuse statutes that result in fines or penalties being imposed on the City) on the financial statements.

Similarly, in performing our audit we will be aware of the possibility that illegal acts may have occurred. However, it should be recognized that our audit provides no assurance that illegal acts generally will be detected, and only reasonable assurance that illegal acts having a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts will be detected. We will inform you with respect to errors and fraud, or illegal acts that come to our attention during the course of our audit unless clearly inconsequential. In the event that we have to consult with the City's counsel or counsel of our choosing regarding any illegal acts we identify, additional fees incurred may be billed to the City. You agree that the City will cooperate fully with any procedures we deem necessary to perform with respect to these matters.

We will issue a written report upon completion of our audit of the City's financial statements. If, for any reason, we are unable to complete the audit, or are unable to form, or have not formed an opinion on the financial statements, we may decline to express an opinion or

decline to issue a report as a result of the engagement. We will notify the appropriate party within your organization of our decision and discuss the reasons supporting our position.

Audit procedures – general

An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements; therefore, our audit will involve professional judgment about the number of transactions to be examined and the areas to be tested. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the City's management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements. We will plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable rather than absolute assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement, whether from (1) errors, (2) fraudulent financial reporting, (3) misappropriation of assets, or (4) violations of laws or governmental regulations that are attributable to the City or to acts by the City's management or employees acting on behalf of the City. Because the determination of waste and abuse is subjective, *Government Auditing Standards* do not expect auditors to perform specific procedures to detect waste or abuse in financial audits, nor do they expect auditors to provide reasonable assurance of detecting waste and abuse.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, combined with the inherent limitations of internal control there is an unavoidable risk that some material misstatements may not be detected by us, even though the audit is properly planned and performed in accordance with U.S. generally accepted auditing standards and *Government Auditing Standards*. In addition, an audit is not designed to detect immaterial misstatements or violations of laws or governmental regulations that do not have a direct and material effect on the financial statements. However, we will inform the appropriate level of the City's management of any material errors, fraudulent financial reporting, or misappropriation of assets that come to our attention. We will also inform the appropriate level of management of any violations of laws or governmental regulations that come to our attention, unless clearly inconsequential. We will include such matters in the reports required for a program specific audit. Our responsibility as auditor is limited to the period covered by our audit and does not extend to any later periods for which we are not engaged as auditors.

Our procedures will include tests of documentary evidence supporting the transactions recorded in the accounts, and may include tests of the physical existence of inventories, and direct confirmation of receivables and certain assets and liabilities by correspondence with selected customers, funding sources, creditors and financial institutions. We will request written representations from your attorneys as part of the engagement, and they may bill you for responding to this inquiry. At the conclusion of our audit, we will require certain written representations from you about your responsibilities for the financial statements; schedule of expenditures of federal awards and state financial assistance; federal award programs and state projects; compliance with laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements; and other responsibilities required by generally accepted auditing standards.

Audit procedures – internal controls

Our audit will include obtaining an understanding of the City and its environment, including internal controls relevant to the audit, sufficient to identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to error or fraud, and to design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks and obtain evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion(s). The risk of not detecting a material

misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentation, or the override of internal control. Tests of controls may be performed to test the effectiveness of certain controls that we consider relevant to preventing and detecting errors and fraud that are material to the financial statements and to preventing and detecting misstatements resulting from illegal acts and other noncompliance matters that have a direct and material effect on the financial statements. Our tests, if performed, will be less in scope than would be necessary to render an opinion on internal control, including cybersecurity, and, accordingly, no opinion will be expressed in our report on internal control issued pursuant to *Government Auditing Standards*.

As required by the Uniform Guidance and the Florida Single Audit Act and Chapter 10.550, we will perform tests of controls over compliance to evaluate the effectiveness of the design and operation of controls that we consider relevant to preventing or detecting material noncompliance with compliance requirements applicable to each major federal and state award program. However, our tests will be less in scope than would be necessary to render an opinion on those controls and, accordingly, no opinion will be expressed in our report on internal control issued pursuant to the Uniform Guidance and the Florida Single Audit Act and Chapter 10.550.

An audit is not designed to provide assurance on internal control or to identify significant deficiencies or material weaknesses. However, during the audit, we will communicate to the City's management and those charged with governance internal control related matters that are required to be communicated under American Institute of Certified Public Accountants ("AICPA") professional standards, *Government Auditing Standards*, and the Uniform Guidance and the Florida Single Audit Act and Chapter 10.550.

Audit procedures - compliance

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement, we will perform tests of the City's compliance with provisions of applicable laws and regulations, contracts and agreements, including grant agreements. However, the objective of those procedures will not be to provide an opinion on overall compliance and we will not express such an opinion in our report on compliance issued pursuant to *Government Auditing Standards*.

The Uniform Guidance and the Florida Single Audit Act and Chapter 10.550 requires that we also plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the auditee has complied with federal and state statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of federal awards applicable to major programs. Our procedures will consist of tests of transactions and other applicable procedures described in the *OMB Compliance Supplement* for the types of compliance requirements that could have a direct and material effect on each of the City's major programs. For federal programs that are included in the Compliance Supplement, our compliance and internal control procedures will relate to the compliance requirements that the Compliance Supplement identifies as being subject to audit. The purpose of these procedures will be to express an opinion on the City's compliance with requirements applicable to each of its major programs in our report on compliance issued pursuant to the Uniform Guidance and the Florida Single Audit Act and Chapter 10.550.

Nonattest services (if applicable)

All nonattest services to be provided in the attached engagement letter (if applicable) shall be provided pursuant to the AICPA Code of Professional Conduct. The AICPA Code of Professional Conduct requires that we establish objectives of the engagement and the services to be performed, which are described under nonattest services in the attached letter.

You agree that the City's designated individual will assume all the City's management responsibilities for the nonattest services we provide; oversee the services by designating an individual, with suitable skill, knowledge, or experience; evaluate the adequacy and results of the services; and accept responsibility for them. In order to ensure we provide such services in compliance with all professional standards, the designated individual is responsible for:

- Making all financial records and related information available to us
- Ensuring that all material information is disclosed to us
- Granting unrestricted access to persons within the entity from whom we determine it necessary to obtain audit evidence
- Identifying and ensuring that such nonattest complies with the laws and regulations

The accuracy and appropriateness of such nonattest services shall be limited by the accuracy and sufficiency of the information provided by the City's designated individual. In the course of providing such nonattest services, we may provide professional advice and guidance based on knowledge of accounting, tax and other compliance, and of the facts and circumstances as provided by the City's designated individual. Such advice and guidance shall be limited as permitted under the AICPA Code of Professional Conduct.

Responsibilities of Cherry Bekaert LLP with respect to the examination services

In performing our examinations, we will be aware of the possibility that illegal acts may have occurred. However, it should be recognized that our examinations will not include a detailed test of every item supporting the assertion or subject matter and provides no assurance that illegal acts generally will be detected, and only reasonable assurance that illegal acts having a direct and material effect on the assertion will be detected. We will inform you with respect to errors and fraud or illegal acts that come to our attention during the course of our examination unless clearly inconsequential. You agree to cooperate fully with any procedures we deem necessary to perform with respect to these matters.

Our examination will include procedures designed to obtain reasonable assurance that the assertion is in conformity with the criteria described above. Absolute assurance is not attainable because of the nature of evidence and the characteristics of fraud. For example, examinations performed in accordance with attestation standards are based on the concept of selective testing of the data being examined and are, therefore, subject to the limitation that errors or fraud, if they exist, may not be detected.

Communications

At the conclusion of the audit engagement, we may provide the City's management and those charged with governance a letter stating any significant deficiencies or material weaknesses which may have been identified by us during the audit and our recommendations designed to help the City make improvements in its internal control structure and operations related to the identified matters discovered in the financial statement audit. As part of this engagement, we

will ensure that certain additional matters are communicated to the appropriate members of the City. Such matters include (1) our responsibilities under GAAS, (2) the initial selection of and changes in significant accounting policies and their application, (3) our independence with respect to the City, (4) the process used by City's management in formulating particularly sensitive accounting estimates and the basis for our conclusion regarding the reasonableness of those estimates, (5) audit adjustments, if any, that could, in our judgment, either individually or in the aggregate be significant to the financial statements or our report, (6) any disagreements with the City's management concerning a financial accounting, reporting, or auditing matter that could be significant to the financial statements, (7) our views about matters that were the subject of the City's management's consultation with other accountants about auditing and accounting matters, (8) major issues that were discussed with the City's management in connection with the retention of our services, including, among other matters, any discussions regarding the application of accounting principles and auditing standards, and (9) serious difficulties that we encountered in dealing with the City's management related to the performance of the audit.

We have attached a copy of the report on our most recent peer review.

Other matters

Access to working papers

The working papers and related documentation for the engagement are the property of the Firm and constitute confidential information. We have a responsibility to retain the documentation for a period of time to satisfy legal or regulatory requirements for records retention. It is our policy to retain all workpapers and client information for seven years from the date of issuance of the report. It is our policy to retain emails and attachments to emails for a period of 12 months, except as required by any governmental regulation. Except as discussed below, any requests for access to our working papers will be discussed with you prior to making them available to requesting parties. Any parties seeking voluntary access to our working papers must agree to sign our standard access letter.

We may be requested to make certain documentation available to regulators, governmental agencies (e.g., SEC, PCAOB, HUD, RD, DOL, etc.), or their representatives ("Regulators") pursuant to law or regulations. If requested, access to the documentation will be provided to the Regulators. The Regulators may intend to distribute to others, including other governmental agencies, our working papers and related documentation without our knowledge or express permission. You hereby acknowledge and authorize us to allow Regulators access to and copies of documentation as requested. In addition, our Firm, as well as all other major accounting firms, participates in a "peer review" program covering our audit and accounting practices as required by the AICPA. This program requires that once every three years we subject our quality assurance practices to an examination by another accounting firm. As part of the process, the other firm will review a sample of our work. It is possible that the work we perform for the City may be selected by the other firm for their review. If it is, they are bound by professional standards to keep all information confidential. If you object to having the work we do for you reviewed by our peer reviewer, please notify us in writing.

Electronic transmittals

During the course of our engagement, we may need to electronically transmit confidential information to each other, within the Firm, and to other entities engaged by either party.

Although email is an efficient way to communicate, it is not always a secure means of communication and thus, confidentiality may be compromised. As an alternative, we recommend using our Client Portal ("Portal") to transmit documents. Portal allows the City, us, and other involved entities to upload and download documents in a secure location. You agree to the use of email, Portal, and other electronic methods to transmit and receive information, including confidential information, between the Firm, the City, and other third party providers utilized by either party in connection with the engagement.

Use of third party providers and alternative practice structure

Cherry Bekaert LLP and Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC (an associated, but not affiliated entity) are parties to an administrative services agreement ("ASA"). Cherry Bekaert LLP and Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC are operating in an arrangement commonly described as an "alternative practice structure". Pursuant to the ASA, Cherry Bekaert LLP leases professional and administrative staff, both of which are employed by Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC, to support Cherry Bekaert LLP's performance under this engagement letter. As a result, Cherry Bekaert LLP will share your confidential information with Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC so that the leased employees are able to support Cherry Bekaert LLP's performance under this engagement letter. These leased employees are under the direct control and supervision of Cherry Bekaert LLP, which is solely responsible for the professional performance of the services under this engagement letter. The leased employees are subject to the standards governing the accounting profession, including the requirement to maintain the confidentiality of client information, and Cherry Bekaert LLP and Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC have contractual agreements requiring confidential treatment of all client information.

To the extent Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC will provide tax, advisory, and/or consulting services to you, Cherry Bekaert LLP will provide Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC with access to your accounting, financial, and other records that Cherry Bekaert LLP maintains to enable Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC to provide those services to you.

In addition to the structure noted above, in the normal course of business, we may on occasion use the services of an independent contractor or a temporary or loaned employee, all of whom may be considered a third party service provider. On these occasions, we remain responsible for the adequate oversight of all services performed by the third party service provider and for ensuring that all services are performed with professional competence and due professional care. We will adequately plan and supervise the services provided by the third party service provider; obtain sufficient relevant data to support the work product; and review compliance with technical standards applicable to the professional services rendered. We will enter into a contractual agreement with the third party service provider to maintain the confidentiality of information and be reasonably assured that the third party service provider has appropriate procedures in place to prevent the unauthorized release of confidential information to others.

Subpoenas

In the event we are requested or authorized by the City, or required by government regulation, subpoena, or other legal process to produce our working papers or our personnel as witnesses with respect to our engagement for the City, the City will, so long as we are not a party to the proceeding in which the information is sought, reimburse us for our professional time and expense, as well as the fees and expenses of our counsel, incurred in responding to such a request at standard billing rates.

Dispute resolution provision

This Dispute Resolution Provision sets forth the dispute resolution process and procedures applicable to any dispute or claim arising out of or relating to this engagement letter or the services provided hereunder, or any other audit or attest services provided by or on behalf of the Firm or any of its subcontractors or agents to the City or at its request ("Disputes"), and shall apply to the fullest extent of the law, whether in contract, statute, tort (such as negligence), or otherwise.

Mediation

All Disputes shall be first submitted to nonbinding confidential mediation by written notice to the parties, and shall be treated as compromise and settlement negotiations under the standards set forth in the Federal Rules of Evidence and all applicable state counterparts, together with any applicable statutes protecting the confidentiality of mediations or settlement discussions. If the parties cannot agree on a mediator, the International Institute for Conflict Prevention and Resolution ("CPR"), at the written request of a party, shall designate a mediator.

Arbitration procedures

If a Dispute has not been resolved within 90 days after the effective date of the written notice beginning the mediation process (or such longer period, if the parties so agree in writing), the mediation shall terminate and the Dispute shall be settled by binding arbitration to be held at a mutually agreeable location. The arbitration shall be conducted in accordance with the CPR Rules for Non-Administered Arbitration that are in effect at the time of the commencement of the arbitration, except to the extent modified by this Dispute Resolution Provision (the "Rules"). The arbitration shall be conducted before a panel of three arbitrators. Each of the City and the Firm shall designate one arbitrator in accordance with the "screened" appointment procedure provided in the Rules, and the two party-designated arbitrators shall jointly select the third in accordance with the Rules. No arbitrator may serve on the panel unless he or she has agreed in writing to enforce the terms of the engagement letter and to abide by the terms of the Rules. Except with respect to the interpretation and enforcement of these arbitration procedures (which shall be governed by the Federal Arbitration Act), the arbitrators shall apply the laws of the State of Florida (without giving effect to its choice of law principles) in connection with the Dispute. The arbitrators may render a summary disposition relative to all or some of the issues, provided that the responding party has had an adequate opportunity to respond to any such application for such disposition. Any discovery shall be conducted in accordance with the Rules. The result of the arbitration shall be binding on the parties, and judgment on the arbitration award may be entered in any court having jurisdiction.

Costs

Each party shall bear its own costs in both the mediation and the arbitration; however, the parties shall share the fees and expenses of both the mediators and the arbitrators equally.

Waiver of trial by jury

In the event the parties are unable to successfully arbitrate any dispute, controversy, or claim, the parties agree to WAIVE TRIAL BY JURY and agree that the court will hear any matter without a jury.

Terms and conditions supporting fees

The estimated fees set forth in the attached engagement letter are based on anticipated full cooperation from the City's personnel, timely delivery of requested audit schedules and supporting information, timely communication of all significant accounting and financial reporting matters, the assumption that unexpected circumstances will not be encountered during the audit, as well as working space and clerical assistance as mutually agreed upon and as is normal and reasonable in the circumstances. We strive to ensure that we have the right professionals scheduled on each engagement. As a result, sudden City requested scheduling changes or scheduling changes necessitated by the agreed information not being ready on the agreed-upon dates can result in expensive downtime for our professionals. Any last minute schedule changes that result in downtime for our professionals could result in additional fees. Our estimated fees do not include assistance in bookkeeping or other accounting services not previously described. If, for any reason, the City is unable to provide such schedules, information, and assistance, the Firm and the City will mutually revise the fee to reflect additional services, if any, required of us to achieve these objectives.

The estimated fees contemplate that the City will provide adequate documentation of its systems and controls related to significant transaction cycles and audit areas.

In providing our services, we will consult with the City with respect to matters of accounting, financial reporting, or other significant business issues as permitted by professional standards. Accordingly, time necessary to affect a reasonable amount of such consultation is reflected in our fees. However, should a matter require research, consultation, or audit work beyond that amount, the Firm and the City will agree to an appropriate revision in our fee.

The estimated fees are based on auditing and accounting standards effective as of the date of this engagement letter and known to apply to the City at this time. Unless otherwise indicated, estimated fees do not include any time related to the application of new auditing or accounting standards that impact the City for the first time. If new auditing or accounting standards are issued subsequent to the date of this letter and are effective for the period under audit, we will estimate the impact of any such standard on the nature, timing, and extent of our planned audit procedures and will communicate with the City concerning the scope of the additional procedures and the estimated fees.

The City agrees to pay all costs of collection (including reasonable attorneys' fees) that the Firm may incur in connection with the collection of unpaid invoices. In the event of nonpayment of any invoice rendered by us, we retain the right to (a) suspend the performance of our services, (b) change the payment conditions under this engagement letter, or (c) terminate our services. If we elect to suspend our services, such services will not be resumed until your account is paid. If we elect to terminate our services for nonpayment, the City will be obligated to compensate us for all time expended and reimburse us for all expenses through the date of termination.

This engagement letter sets forth the entire understanding between the City and the Firm regarding the services described herein and supersedes any previous proposals, correspondence, and understandings whether written or oral. Any subsequent changes to the terms of this letter, other than additional billings, will be rendered in writing and shall be executed by both parties. Should any portion of this engagement letter be ruled invalid, it is agreed that such invalidity will not affect any of the remaining portions.

Report on the Firm's System of Quality Control

November 29, 2022

To the Partners of Cherry Bekaert LLP and the National Peer Review Committee

We have reviewed the system of quality control for the accounting and auditing practice of Cherry Bekaert LLP (the firm) applicable to engagements not subject to PCAOB permanent inspection in effect for the year ended April 30, 2022. Our peer review was conducted in accordance with the Standards for Performing and Reporting on Peer Reviews established by the Peer Review Board of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (Standards).

A summary of the nature, objectives, scope, limitations of, and the procedures performed in a system review as described in the Standards may be found at www.aicpa.org/prsummary. The summary also includes an explanation of how engagements identified as not performed or reported on in conformity with applicable professional standards, if any, are evaluated by a peer reviewer to determine a peer review rating.

Firm's Responsibility

The firm is responsible for designing and complying with a system of quality control to provide the firm with reasonable assurance of performing and reporting in conformity with the requirements of applicable professional standards in all material respects. The firm is also responsible for evaluating actions to promptly remediate engagements deemed as not performed or reported on in conformity with the requirements of applicable professional standards, when appropriate, and for remediating weaknesses in its system of quality control, if any.

Peer Reviewer's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the design of and compliance with the firm's system of quality control based on our review.

Required Selections and Considerations

Engagements selected for review included engagements performed under Government Auditing Standards, including compliance audits under the Single Audit Act; audits of employee benefit plans; an audit performed under FDICIA; and an examination of service organizations (SOC 2 engagement).

As a part of our peer review, we considered reviews by regulatory entities as communicated by the firm, if applicable, in determining the nature and extent of our procedures.



Opinion

In our opinion, the system of quality control for the accounting and auditing practice of Cherry Bekaert LLP applicable to engagements not subject to PCAOB permanent inspection in effect for the year ended April 30, 2022, has been suitably designed and complied with to provide the firm with reasonable assurance of performing and reporting in conformity with applicable professional standards in all material respects. Firms can receive a rating of pass, pass with deficiency(ies), or fail. Cherry Bekaert LLP has received a peer review rating of pass.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "EisnerAmper LLP". The script is fluid and cursive, with the letters "E", "A", and "L" being particularly prominent.

EisnerAmper LLP
Iselin, New Jersey

