



UNDERWRITER/PLACEMENT AGENT ENGAGEMENT LETTER TO BE USED TO ESTABLISH  
THE UNDERWRITER/PLACEMENT AGENT EXCLUSION  
UNDER MUNICIPAL ADVISOR RULES

September 6, 2018

Ms. Mary Sue Hibbs, City Clerk  
City of Earlham  
140 S Chestnut Ave, PO Box 518  
Earlham, IA 50072

Re: Engagement Letter with the City of Earlham (“Issuer”)  
General Obligation Bonds, Sewer Revenue Bonds, Storm Water Revenue Bonds, and  
/ or Water Revenue Bonds , Series 2018-2023 (the “Bonds”)  
Projects: Water Tower /System upgrades, Sewer Plant / System Upgrades, Fire  
Station, Sewer and Storm Lining, Street Improvements

Dear Ms. Hibbs:

On behalf of Piper Jaffray & Co. (“us” or “Piper”), we are writing concerning a potential municipal securities transaction as identified above. This letter confirms that you engage Piper Jaffray as an **underwriter or placement agent, to be determined later**, respecting the Bonds, subject to the conditions and limitations described below.

This engagement is preliminary in nature, non-binding and may be terminated at any time by you or us. Although you intend or reasonably expect to use Piper Jaffray as an underwriter or placement agent respecting the Bonds, this engagement is subject to any applicable procurement laws and the formal approval of Piper Jaffray as underwriter or placement agent by your board or governing body, and is also subject to mutual agreement as to the final structure for the Bonds and the terms of a bond purchase or similar agreement. This engagement does not restrict you from using other underwriters or placement agents respecting the Bonds or any other municipal securities transaction or prevent you from delaying or cancelling the Bond issue or selecting an underwriting syndicate that does not include Piper Jaffray.

As an underwriter or placement agent, Piper may provide advice concerning the structure, timing, terms, and other similar matters concerning the Bonds. Attached to this letter are regulatory disclosures required by the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board to be made by us at this time because of this engagement. We may be required to send you additional disclosures regarding the material financial characteristics and risks of such transaction or describing those conflicts. At that time, we also will seek your acknowledgement of receipt of any such additional disclosures. It is our understanding that you have the authority to bind the issuer by contract with us, and that you are not a party to any conflict of interest relating to the Bonds. If our understanding is incorrect, please notify the undersigned immediately.

We wish to receive your written acknowledgement that you have received the Appendix A disclosures and that this engagement is approved. Accordingly, please send me an email to that affect, or sign and return the enclosed copy of this letter to me at the address set forth below. If you have any questions or concerns about anything in this letter, please make those questions or concerns known immediately to us at the contact information below.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

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**Travis R. Squires**

*Managing Director | Des Moines Public Finance Services*

**Piper Jaffray & Co.**

3900 Ingersoll Avenue, Suite 110 | Des Moines, IA 50312-3800

[travis.r.squires@pjc.com](mailto:travis.r.squires@pjc.com)

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Acknowledgement of Approval of Engagement  
and Receipt of Appendix A, B, and C Disclosures

City of Earlham, Iowa

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix A – G-17 Disclosure

We are providing you with certain disclosures relating to the captioned bond issue (the Bonds), as required by the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board (MSRB) Rule G-17 in accordance with MSRB Notice 2012-25 (May 7, 2012). Under new federal regulations, all underwriters and placement agents are now required to send the following disclosures to you (as the Issuer of the Bonds) in order to clarify with you the role of an underwriter or placement agent and other matters relating to an underwriting of the Bonds.

Piper Jaffray intends to serve as an underwriter respecting the Bonds and not as a financial advisor or municipal advisor to you. As part of our services as an underwriter, Piper Jaffray may provide advice concerning the structure, timing, terms, and other similar matters concerning an issue of municipal securities that Piper Jaffray is underwriting or placing.

If Piper Jaffray has been engaged to act as your underwriter in a negotiated underwriting, and by engaging Piper Jaffray as your underwriter, you determined to sell the Bonds by negotiated sale. A negotiated sale is the sale of a new issue of municipal securities by an issuer directly to an underwriter or underwriting syndicate selected by the issuer. A negotiated sale is distinguished from a sale by competitive bid, which requires public bidding by the underwriters. Piper Jaffray did not advise you as to what method of sale (competitive or negotiated sale) you used for this issuance of municipal securities.

### ***Our Role as Underwriter:***

In serving as underwriter for the Bonds, these are some important disclosures that clarify our role and responsibilities:

- (i) MSRB Rule G-17 requires an underwriter to deal fairly at all times with both municipal issuers and investors;
- (ii) The underwriter's primary role is to purchase securities with a view to distribution in an arm's-length commercial transaction with the Issuer and it has financial and other interests that differ from those of the Issuer;
- (iii) Unlike a municipal advisor, the underwriter does not have a fiduciary duty to the Issuer under the federal securities laws and is, therefore, not required by federal law to act in the best interests of the Issuer without regard to its own financial or other interests;
- (iv) The underwriter has a duty to purchase securities from the Issuer at a fair and reasonable price, but must balance that duty with its duty to sell municipal securities to investors at prices that are fair and reasonable; and
- (v) The underwriter will review the official statement for the Issuer's securities in accordance with, and as part of, its responsibilities to investors under the federal securities laws, as applied to the facts and circumstances of the transaction.<sup>1</sup>

### ***Our Role as Placement Agent:***

In serving as placement agent for the Bonds, these are some important disclosures that clarify our role and responsibilities:

- (i) MSRB Rule G-17 requires us to deal fairly at all times with both municipal issuers and investors;
- (ii) Our primary role in this transaction is to facilitate the sale and purchase of municipal securities between you and one or more investors for which we will receive compensation;
- (iii) Unlike a municipal advisor, we do not have a fiduciary duty to you under the federal securities laws and are, therefore, not required by federal law to act in your best interests without regard to our own financial or other interests;

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<sup>1</sup> Under federal securities law, an issuer of securities has the primary responsibility for disclosure for investors. The review of the official statement by the underwriter is solely for purposes of satisfying the underwriter's obligations under the federal securities laws and such review should not be construed by an issuer as a guarantee of the accuracy or completeness of the information in the official statement.

- (iv) We have a duty to arrange the purchase securities from you at a fair and reasonable price, but must balance that duty with our duty to arrange the sale to investors at prices that are fair and reasonable; and
- (v) In the event an official statement is prepared, we will review the official statement for your securities in accordance with, and as part of, our responsibilities to investors under the federal securities laws, as applied to the facts and circumstances of the transaction.

***Our Compensation:***

As underwriter, compensation will be by a fee and/or an underwriting discount that will be set forth in the bond purchase agreement to be negotiated and entered into in connection with the issuance of the Bonds. As placement agent, compensation will be by a fee that was negotiated and entered into in connection with the issuance of the Bonds. Payment or receipt of the underwriting fee, discount or placement agent fee will be contingent on the closing of the transaction and the amount of the fee or discount may be based, in whole or in part, on a percentage of the principal amount of the Bonds. While this form of compensation is customary in the municipal securities market, it presents a conflict of interest since the underwriter or placement agent may have an incentive to recommend to the Issuer a transaction that is unnecessary or to recommend that the size of the transaction be larger than is necessary.

We have entered into a separate agreement with Iowa State Revolving Loan Fund that enables Iowa State Revolving Fund to distribute certain new issue municipal securities underwritten by or allocated to us which could include the Bonds. Under that agreement, we will share with Iowa State Revolving Loan Fund, a portion of the fee or commission paid to us.

You may elect to retain us to serve as a bidding agent with respect to the investment of the proceeds of the Bonds. We will be separately compensated for serving in that capacity.

***Conflicts of Interest for Underwritings Only:***

We have entered into an agreement with Pershing LLC which enables us to distribute certain new issue municipal securities underwritten by or allocated to us which could include the Bonds. Under the agreement, we could share with Pershing LLC a portion of the fee or commission paid to us as underwriter.

We have entered into a separate agreement with Charles Schwab & Co., Inc. that enables Charles Schwab & Co., Inc. to distribute certain new issue municipal securities underwritten by or allocated to us which could include the Bonds. Under that agreement, we will share with Charles Schwab & Co., a portion of the fee or commission paid to us.

***Risk Disclosures:***

In accordance with the requirements of MSRB Rule G-17, attached as Appendix B is a description of the material aspects of a typical fixed rate offering, including the Bonds. This letter may be later supplemented if the material terms of the Bonds change from what is described here.

If you have any questions or concerns about these disclosures, please make those questions or concerns known immediately to me. In addition, you should consult with your own financial, legal, accounting, tax and other advisors, as applicable, to the extent you deem appropriate.

## Appendix B – Risk Disclosures

The following is a general description of the financial characteristics and security structures of fixed rate municipal bonds (“Fixed Rate Bonds”), as well as a general description of certain financial risks that you should consider before deciding whether to issue Fixed Rate Bonds.

### Financial Characteristics

*Maturity and Interest.* Fixed Rate Bonds are interest-bearing debt securities issued by state and local governments, political subdivisions and agencies and authorities. Maturity dates for Fixed Rate Bonds are fixed at the time of issuance and may include serial maturities (specified principal amounts are payable on the same date in each year until final maturity), one or more term maturities (specified principal amounts are payable on each term maturity date), a combination of serial and term maturities, or bullet maturities, in which all the Bonds mature on a single maturity date. The final maturity date typically will range between 10 and 30 years from the date of issuance. Interest on the Fixed Rate Bonds typically is paid semiannually at a stated fixed rate or rates for each maturity date.

*Redemption.* Fixed Rate Bonds may be subject to optional redemption, which allows you, at your option, to redeem some or all of the bonds on a date prior to scheduled maturity, such as in connection with the issuance of refunding bonds to take advantage of lower interest rates. Fixed Rate Bonds will be subject to optional redemption only after the passage of a specified period of time, often approximately ten years from the date of issuance, and upon payment of the redemption price set forth in the bonds, which may include a redemption premium. You will be required to send out a notice of optional redemption to the holders of the bonds, usually not less than 30 days prior to the redemption date. Fixed Rate Bonds with term maturity dates also may be subject to mandatory sinking fund redemption, which requires you to redeem specified principal amounts of the bonds annually in advance of the term maturity date. The mandatory sinking fund redemption price is 100% of the principal amount of the bonds to be redeemed.

### Security

Payment of principal of and interest on a municipal security, including Fixed Rate Bonds, may be backed by various types of pledges and forms of security, some of which are described below.

#### General Obligation Bonds

“General obligation bonds” are debt securities to which your full faith and credit is pledged to pay principal and interest. If you have taxing power, generally you will pledge to use your ad valorem (property) taxing power to pay principal and interest. Ad valorem taxes necessary to pay debt service on general obligation bonds may not be subject to state constitutional property tax millage limits (an unlimited tax general obligation bond). The term “limited” tax is used when such limits exist.

General obligation bonds constitute a debt and, depending on applicable state law, may require that you obtain approval by voters prior to issuance. In the event of default in required payments of interest or principal, the holders of general obligation bonds have certain rights under state law to compel you to impose a tax levy.

#### Revenue Bonds

“Revenue bonds” are debt securities that are payable only from a specific source or sources of revenues. Revenue bonds are not a pledge of your full faith and credit and you are obligated to pay principal and interest on your revenue bonds only from the revenue source(s) specifically pledged to the bonds. Revenue bonds do not permit the bondholders to compel you to impose a tax levy for payment of debt service. Pledged revenues may be derived from operation of the financed project or system, grants or excise or other specified taxes. Generally, subject to state law or local charter

requirements, you are not required to obtain voter approval prior to issuance of revenue bonds. If the specified source(s) of revenue become inadequate, a default in payment of principal or interest may occur. Various types of pledges of revenue may be used to secure interest and principal payments on revenue bonds. The nature of these pledges may differ widely based on state law, the type of issuer, the type of revenue stream and other factors.

#### General Fund Obligations

“General Fund Obligations” are debt securities that are payable from an issuer’s general fund and are not secured by a specific tax levy like a general obligation bond or a specific revenue pledge like a revenue bond. General fund obligations come in many varieties and may be a continuing obligation of the general fund or may be subject to annual appropriation. Often general fund obligations are issued in the form of certificates of participation in a lease obligation of the issuer.

### **Financial Risk Considerations**

Certain risks may arise in connection with your issuance of Fixed Rate Bonds, including some or all of the following:

#### Risk of Default and Fiscal Stress

You may be in default if the funds pledged to secure your bonds are not sufficient to pay debt service on the bonds when due. The consequences of a default may be serious for you and may include the exercise of available remedies against you on behalf of the holders of the bonds. Depending on state law, if the bonds are secured by a general obligation pledge, you may be ordered by a court to raise taxes or other budgetary adjustments may be necessary to enable you to provide sufficient funds to pay debt service on the bonds. If the bonds are revenue bonds, subject to applicable state law and the terms of the authorizing documents, you may be required to take steps to increase the available revenues that are pledged as security for the bonds.

Bonds payable from the general fund, particularly bonds without a defined revenue stream identified to pay debt service, reduce your flexibility to balance the general fund. Because a fixed debt service payment is required to be paid regardless of how your general fund is impacted by revenue losses or by increased expenses, you have less flexibility in the options available to you in assuring a balanced budget for your general fund.

General Fund Obligations that are Project Based. Some general fund obligations are issued for projects which are expected to generate revenues that will pay for some or all of the debt service on the bonds. In the event the project does not generate the anticipated levels of revenues available for debt service, or, in the extreme case, does not create any revenue available for debt service, you may need to make payments from other available general fund revenues. This may force you to reduce other expenditures or to make difficult decisions about how to pay your debt service obligation while meeting other expenditure needs.

General Fund Obligations that are Subject to Annual Appropriation. Some general fund obligations require that debt service is subject to annual appropriation by your governing body. If your governing body decides not to appropriate payments for debt service, your credit ratings may be negatively impacted and you may be forced to pay a higher interest rate on future debt issuance or may be unable to access the market for future debt issuance.

For all bonds, a default may negatively impact your credit ratings and may effectively limit your ability to publicly offer bonds or other securities at market interest rate levels. Further, if you are unable to provide sufficient funds to remedy the default, subject to applicable state law and the terms of the authorizing documents, it may be necessary for you to consider available alternatives under state law, including (for some issuers) state-mandated receivership or bankruptcy. A default also may occur if you are unable to comply with covenants or other provisions agreed to in connection with the issuance of the bonds.

### Redemption Risk

Your ability to redeem the bonds prior to maturity may be limited, depending on the terms of any optional redemption provisions. In the event that interest rates decline, you may be unable to take advantage of the lower interest rates to reduce debt service.

### Refinancing Risk

If the financing plan contemplates refinancing some or all of the bonds at maturity (for example, if there are term maturities, bullet maturities or if a shorter final maturity is chosen than might otherwise be permitted under the applicable federal tax rules), market conditions or changes in law may limit or prevent the refinancing of those bonds when required. Further, limitations in the federal tax rules on advance refunding of bonds (an advance refunding of bonds occurs when tax-exempt bonds are refunded more than 90 days prior to the date on which those bonds may be retired) may restrict the ability to refund the bonds to take advantage of lower interest rates.

### Reinvestment Risk

You may have proceeds of the bonds to invest prior to the time that you are able to spend those proceeds for the authorized purpose. Depending on market conditions, you may not be able to invest those proceeds at or near the rate of interest that you are paying on the bonds, which is referred to as “negative arbitrage”.

### Tax Compliance Risk

The issuance of tax-exempt bonds is subject to a number of requirements under the United States Internal Revenue Code, as enforced by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). You must take certain steps and make certain representations prior to the issuance of tax-exempt bonds. You also must covenant to take certain additional actions after issuance of the tax-exempt bonds. A breach of your representations or your failure to comply with certain tax-related covenants may cause the interest on the bonds to become taxable retroactively to the date of issuance of the bonds, which may result in an increase in the interest rate that you pay on the bonds or the mandatory redemption of the bonds. The IRS also may audit you or your bonds, in some cases on a random basis and in other cases targeted to specific types of bond issues or tax concerns. If the bonds are declared taxable, or if you are subject to audit, the market price of your bonds may be adversely affected. Further, your ability to issue other tax-exempt bonds also may be limited.

## Appendix C – Other Disclosures

### MSRB G-23 Disclosure

As part of our services, Piper Jaffray may provide advice concerning the structure, timing, terms, and other similar matters concerning an issue of municipal securities that Piper Jaffray is underwriting or placing. However, Piper Jaffray intends to serve as an underwriter or placement agent respecting the Bonds and not as a financial advisor to you; and the primary role of Piper Jaffray is to purchase the Bonds for resale to investors or arrange for the placement of the Bonds in an arm's-length commercial transaction between you and Piper Jaffray. Piper Jaffray has financial and other interests that differ from your interests.

### MSRB G-17 Disclosures

As an underwriter or placement agent, Piper may provide advice concerning the structure, timing, terms, and other similar matters concerning the Bonds. Attached to this letter are regulatory disclosures required by the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board to be made by us at this time because of this engagement. We may be required to send you additional disclosures regarding the material financial characteristics and risks of such transaction or describing those conflicts. At that time, we also will seek your acknowledgement of receipt of any such additional disclosures. It is our understanding that you have the authority to bind the issuer by contract with us, and that you are not a party to any conflict of interest relating to the Bonds. If our understanding is incorrect, please notify the undersigned immediately.