



**Auditor of State  
Betty Montgomery**





Mary Taylor, CPA  
Auditor of State

February 28, 2007

The attached audit report was completed and prepared for release prior to the commencement of my term of office on January 8, 2007. Thus, I am certifying this audit report for release under the signature of my predecessor.

*Mary Taylor*

MARY TAYLOR, CPA  
Auditor of State

**This Page is Intentionally Left Blank.**

**GARRETTSVILLE-FREEDOM-NELSON JOINT FIRE DISTRICT  
PORTAGE COUNTY**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
Cover Letter.....	1
Independent Accountants' Report.....	3
Statement of Cash Receipts, Cash Disbursements, and Changes in Fund Cash Balances – Fire District Fund - For the Year Ended December 31, 2005.....	5
Statement of Cash Receipts, Cash Disbursements, and Changes in Fund Cash Balances – Fire District Fund - For the Year Ended December 31, 2004.....	6
Notes to the Financial Statements .....	7
Independent Accountants' Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters Required by <i>Government Auditing Standards</i> .....	11

**This page intentionally left blank.**



**Auditor of State  
Betty Montgomery**

Garrettsville-Freedom-Nelson Joint Fire District  
Portage County  
PO Box 344  
Garrettsville, Ohio 44231

To the Board of Trustees:

As you are aware, the Auditor of State's Office (AOS) must modify the *Independent Accountants' Report* we provide on your financial statements due to a February 2, 2005 interpretation from the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA). While AOS does not legally require your government to prepare financial statements pursuant to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), the AICPA interpretation requires auditors to formally acknowledge that you did not prepare your financial statements in accordance with GAAP. Our Report includes an opinion relating to GAAP presentation and measurement requirements, but does not imply the amounts the statements present are misstated under the non-GAAP basis you follow. The AOS report also includes an opinion on the financial statements you prepared using the cash basis and financial statement format the AOS permits.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Betty Montgomery".

**Betty Montgomery**  
Auditor of State

January 5, 2007

**This page intentionally left blank.**





**Auditor of State  
Betty Montgomery**

**INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REPORT**

Garrettsville-Freedom-Nelson Joint Fire District  
Portage County  
PO Box 344  
Garrettsville, Ohio 44231

To the Board of Trustees:

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Garrettsville-Freedom-Nelson Joint Fire District, Portage County, (the District) as of and for the years ended December 31, 2005 and 2004. These financial statements are the responsibility of the District's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in the Comptroller General of the United States' *Government Auditing Standards*. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to reasonably assure whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

As described more fully in Note 1, the District has prepared these financial statements using accounting practices the Auditor of State prescribes or permits. These practices differ from accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP). Although we cannot reasonably determine the effects on the financial statements of the variances between these regulatory accounting practices and GAAP, we presume they are material.

Revisions to GAAP would require the District to reformat its financial statement presentation and make other changes effective for the years ended December 31, 2004 and 2005. Instead of the fund the accompanying financial statements present for the revisions require presenting entity wide statements and also to present its larger (i.e. major) fund separately. While the District does not follow GAAP, generally accepted auditing standards requires us to include the following paragraph if the statements do not substantially conform to the new GAAP presentation requirements. The Auditor of State permits, but does not require governments to reformat their statements. The District has elected not to reformat its statements. Since this District does not use GAAP to measure financial statement amounts, the following paragraph does not imply the amounts reported are materially misstated under the accounting basis the Auditor of State permits. Our opinion on the fair presentation of the amounts reported pursuant to its non-GAAP basis is in the second following paragraph.

In our opinion, because of the effects of the matter discussed in the preceding two paragraphs, the financial statements referred to above for the years ended December 31, 2005 and 2004 do not present fairly, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, the financial position of the District as of December 31, 2005 and 2004, or its changes in financial position for the years then ended.

Voinovich Government Center / 242 Federal Plaza W. / Suite 302 / Youngstown, OH 44503-1293

Telephone: (330) 797-9900 (800) 443-9271 Fax: (330) 797-9949

[www.auditor.state.oh.us](http://www.auditor.state.oh.us)

Also, in our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the fund cash balances of Garrettsville-Freedom-Nelson Joint Fire District, Portage County, as of December 31, 2005 and 2004, and its cash receipts and disbursements for the years then ended on the accounting basis Note 1 describes.

The aforementioned revision to generally accepted accounting principles also requires the District to include Management's Discussion and Analysis for the years ended December 31, 2005 and 2004. The District has not presented Management's Discussion and Analysis, which accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America has determined is necessary to supplement, although not required to be part of, the financial statements.

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated January 5, 2007, on our consideration of the District's internal control over financial reporting and our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements and other matters. While we did not opine on the internal control over financial reporting or on compliance, that report describes the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance, and the results of that testing. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*. You should read it in conjunction with this report in assessing the results of our audit.



**Betty Montgomery**  
Auditor of State

January 5, 2007

**GARRETTSVILLE-FREEDOM-NELSON JOINT FIRE DISTRICT  
PORTAGE COUNTY**

**STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS, CASH DISBURSEMENTS, AND  
CHANGES IN FUND CASH BALANCES  
FIRE DISTRICT FUND  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2005**

	<u><b>Fire District Fund</b></u>
<b>Cash Receipts:</b>	
Local Taxes	\$375,705
Intergovernmental	46,617
Earnings on Investments	8,124
Miscellaneous	4,700
	<hr/>
Total Cash Receipts	435,146
	<hr/>
<b>Cash Disbursements:</b>	
Current:	
Security of Persons and Property	235,417
General Government	50,432
Other	15,802
Capital Outlay	176,112
	<hr/>
Total Disbursements	477,763
	<hr/>
Total Receipts Over/(Under) Disbursements	(42,617)
	<hr/>
Fund Cash Balances, January 1	281,022
	<hr/>
<b>Fund Cash Balances, December 31</b>	<u><b>\$238,405</b></u>

*The notes to the financial statements are an integral part of this statement.*

**GARRETTSVILLE-FREEDOM-NELSON JOINT FIRE DISTRICT  
PORTAGE COUNTY**

**STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS, CASH DISBURSEMENTS, AND  
CHANGES IN FUND CASH BALANCES  
FIRE DISTRICT FUND  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2004**

	<u>Fire District Fund</u>
<b>Cash Receipts:</b>	
Local Taxes	\$376,766
Intergovernmental	45,121
Earnings on Investments	1,900
Miscellaneous	3,768
	<hr/>
Total Cash Receipts	427,555
	<hr/>
<b>Cash Disbursements:</b>	
Current:	
Security of Persons and Property	221,010
General Government	37,339
Other	18,882
Capital Outlay	27,573
	<hr/>
Total Disbursements	304,804
	<hr/>
Total Receipts Over/(Under) Disbursements	122,751
	<hr/>
Fund Cash Balances, January 1	158,271
	<hr/>
<b>Fund Cash Balances, December 31</b>	<b><u><u>\$281,022</u></u></b>

*The notes to the financial statements are an integral part of this statement.*

**GARRETTSVILLE-FREEDOM-NELSON JOINT FIRE DISTRICT  
PORTAGE COUNTY**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
DECEMBER 31, 2005 AND 2004**

**1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**A. Description of the Entity**

The constitution and laws of the State of Ohio establish the rights and privileges of the Garrettsville-Freedom-Nelson Joint Fire District, Portage County, (the District) as a body corporate and politic. A three-member Board of Trustees governs the District. Each political subdivision within the District appoints one member. Those subdivisions are the Village of Garrettsville, Freedom Township, and Nelson Township. The District provides fire protection and rescue services within the District and by contract to areas outside the District.

The District's management believes these financial statements present all activities for which the District is financially accountable.

The District is associated with two organizations and a Village which will be discussed below.

The Garfield Fire Department, Inc. (aka Garrettsville Volunteer Fire Department, Inc.) (GFD) and the Garrettsville, Freedom, Nelson Firefighters Association (GFA) are comprised of the same individuals that are employed by the District as volunteer fire fighters.

GFD-This is a Section 509(a) (1) organization which owns the property and building where the District stores their trucks. The District pays \$24,000 annual rent to GFD. This is mainly their only source of revenue. The money is used for maintenance and up keep of the building and property.

GFA-This is an organization which is not incorporated. This organization owns the equipment in the building that is owned by the GFD. The District's firemen get \$5 paid to them for training and they have elected this money to go the GFA. The only other source of revenue is fund raisers that are held throughout the year. The money is used for buying equipment.

The District has a dispatching contract with the Village of Garrettsville. The contract is for \$26,568 annually, which is paid in quarterly installments. The contract has a three year term.

**B. Basis of Accounting**

These financial statements follow the basis of accounting the Auditor of State prescribes or permits, which is similar to the cash receipts and disbursements basis of accounting. This basis recognizes receipts when received in cash rather than when earned and recognizes disbursements when paid rather than when a liability is incurred. Budgetary presentations report budgetary expenditures when a commitment is made (i.e., when an encumbrance is approved).

These statements adequately disclose material matters the Auditor of State prescribes.

**C. Cash and Investments**

The accounting basis includes investments as assets. Accordingly, investment purchases are not recorded as disbursements, and investment sales are not recorded as receipts. Gains or losses at the time of sale are recorded as receipts or disbursements, respectively.

**GARRETTSVILLE-FREEDOM-NELSON JOINT FIRE DISTRICT  
PORTAGE COUNTY**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
DECEMBER 31, 2005 AND 2004  
(Continued)**

**1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES – (Continued)**

**D. Fund Accounting**

The District uses fund accounting to segregate cash and investments that are restricted as to use. The Fire District Fund is the general operating fund. It is used to account for all financial resources.

**E. Budgetary Process**

The Ohio Revised Code requires the District to budget each fund annually.

**1. Appropriations**

Budgetary expenditures (that is, disbursements and encumbrances) may not exceed appropriations at the fund, function level of control and appropriations may not exceed estimated resources. The Board of Trustees must annually approve appropriation measures and subsequent amendments. The County Budget Commission must also approve the annual appropriation measure. Encumbered appropriations lapse at year end.

**2. Estimated Resources**

Estimated resources include estimates of cash to be received (budgeted receipts) plus encumbered cash as of January 1. The County Budget Commission must also approve estimated resources.

**3. Encumbrances**

The Ohio Revised Code requires the District to reserve (encumber) appropriations when commitments are made. Encumbrances outstanding at year end are cancelled, and reappropriated in the subsequent year.

A summary of 2005 and 2004 budgetary activity appears in Note 3.

**F. Property, Plant, and Equipment**

The District records disbursements for acquisitions of property, plant, and equipment when paid. The accompanying financial statements do not report these items as assets.

**2. EQUITY IN POOLED CASH AND INVESTMENTS**

The District maintains a cash and investments pool used by all funds. The Ohio Revised Code prescribes allowable deposits and investments. The carrying amount of cash and investments at December 31 follows:

	<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>
Demand deposits	\$238,405	\$281,022

**Deposits:** Deposits are insured by the Federal Depository Insurance Corporation or collateralized by the financial institution's public entity deposit pool.

**GARRETTSVILLE-FREEDOM-NELSON JOINT FIRE DISTRICT  
PORTAGE COUNTY**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
DECEMBER 31, 2005 AND 2004  
(Continued)**

**3. BUDGETARY ACTIVITY**

Budgetary activity for the years ending December 31, 2005 and 2004 follows:

2005 Budgeted vs. Actual Receipts			
Fund Type	Budgeted Receipts	Actual Receipts	Variance
Fire District Fund	\$441,955	\$435,146	(\$6,809)

2005 Budgeted vs. Actual Budgetary Basis Expenditures			
Fund Type	Appropriation Authority	Budgetary Expenditures	Variance
Fire District Fund	\$722,976	\$477,763	\$245,213

2004 Budgeted vs. Actual Receipts			
Fund Type	Budgeted Receipts	Actual Receipts	Variance
Fire District Fund	\$441,955	\$427,555	(\$14,400)

2004 Budgeted vs. Actual Budgetary Basis Expenditures			
Fund Type	Appropriation Authority	Budgetary Expenditures	Variance
Fire District Fund	\$570,900	\$304,804	\$266,096

**4. PROPERTY TAX**

Real property taxes become a lien on January 1 preceding the October 1 date for which the Board of Trustees adopts rates. The State Board of Tax Equalization adjusts these rates for inflation. Property taxes are also reduced for applicable homestead and rollback deductions. The State then pays the District amounts equaling the homestead and rollback deductions. Payments are due to the County by December 31. If the property owner elects to pay semiannually, the first half is due December 31. The second half payment is due the following June 20.

Public utilities are also taxed on personal and real property located within the District.

Tangible personal property tax owners assess that property. The property owners must file a tangible property list to the County by each April 30.

The County is responsible for assessing property, and for billing, collecting, and distributing all property taxes on behalf of the District.

**5. DEBT**

Debt outstanding at December 31, 2005 was as follows:

	Principal	Interest Rate
Capital Lease	\$440,000	3.87%

**GARRETTSVILLE-FREEDOM-NELSON JOINT FIRE DISTRICT  
PORTAGE COUNTY**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
DECEMBER 31, 2005 AND 2004  
(Continued)**

**5. DEBT – (Continued)**

The District entered into a capital lease agreement to finance the purchase of a new fire truck. The lease was entered on August 1, 2005 for \$440,000, maturing through July 15, 2012.

Amortization of the above debt, including interest, is scheduled as follows:

<u>Year ending December 31:</u>	<u>Lease</u>
2006	\$72,852
2007	72,852
2008	72,852
2009	72,852
2010	72,852
2011-2012	145,704
Total	<u><u>\$509,964</u></u>

**6. RETIREMENT SYSTEMS**

The District's employees belong to the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS). OPERS is a cost-sharing, multiple-employer plan. The Ohio Revised Code prescribes retirement benefits, including postretirement healthcare and survivor and disability benefits.

The Ohio Revised Code also prescribes contribution rates. For 2005 and 2004, OPERS member employees contributed 8.5 percent of their gross salaries. The District contributed an amount equal to 13.55 percent of participants' gross salaries. The District has paid all contributions required through December 31, 2005.

**7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

**Commercial Insurance**

The Garrettsville-Freedom-Nelson Joint Fire District has obtained commercial insurance for the following risks:

- Comprehensive property and general liability;
- Vehicles; and
- Errors and omissions.





**Auditor of State  
Betty Montgomery**

**INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER  
FINANCIAL REPORTING AND ON COMPLIANCE AND OTHER MATTERS  
REQUIRED BY *GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS***

Garrettsville-Freedom-Nelson Joint Fire District  
Portage County  
PO Box 344  
Garrettsville, Ohio 44231

To the Board of Trustees:

We have audited the financial statements of the Garrettsville-Freedom-Nelson Joint Fire District, Portage County, (the District) as of and for the years ended December 31, 2005 and 2004, and have issued our report thereon dated January 5, 2007, wherein we noted the District followed accounting practices the Auditor of State prescribes rather than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in the Comptroller General of the United States' *Government Auditing Standards*.

**Internal Control Over Financial Reporting**

In planning and performing our audit, we considered the District's internal control over financial reporting to determine our auditing procedures to express our opinion on the financial statements and not to opine on the internal control over financial reporting. Our consideration of the internal control would not necessarily disclose all matters in the internal control over financial reporting that might be material weaknesses. A material weakness is a reportable condition in which the design or operation of one or more of the internal control components does not reduce to a relatively low level the risk that misstatements caused by error or fraud in amounts material to the financial statements we audited may occur and not be timely detected by employees when performing their assigned functions. We noted no matters involving the internal control over financial reporting and its operation that we consider material weaknesses.

**Compliance and Other Matters**

As part of reasonably assuring whether the District's financial statements are free of material misstatement, we tested its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could directly and materially affect the determination of financial statement amounts. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit and, accordingly, we do not express an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters we must report under *Government Auditing Standards*.

Garrettsville-Freedom-Nelson Joint Fire District  
Portage County  
Independent Accountants' Report on Internal Control Over  
Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters  
Required by *Government Auditing Standards*  
Page 2

We intend this report solely for the information and use of management and the Board of Trustees. It is not intended for anyone other than these specified parties.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Betty Montgomery". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Betty Montgomery**  
Auditor of State

January 5, 2007



**Mary Taylor, CPA**  
Auditor of State

**GARRETTSVILLE-FREEDOM-NELSON JOINT FIRE DISTRICT**

**PORTAGE COUNTY**

**CLERK'S CERTIFICATION**

**This is a true and correct copy of the report which is required to be filed in the Office of the Auditor of State pursuant to Section 117.26, Revised Code, and which is filed in Columbus, Ohio.**

*Susan Babbitt*

**CLERK OF THE BUREAU**

**CERTIFIED  
MARCH 6, 2007**