



OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE
KEITH FABER



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INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT ON APPLYING AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES

Hopewell Township
Muskingum County
7247 Pinecrest Drive
Zanesville, Ohio 43701

We have performed the procedures enumerated below on Hopewell Township's, Muskingum County, Ohio (the Township) receipts, disbursements and balances recorded in the cash basis accounting records for the years ended December 31, 2024 and 2023 and certain compliance requirements related to those transactions and balances, included in the information provided to us by the management of the Township. The Township is responsible for the receipts, disbursements and balances recorded in the cash basis accounting records for the years ended December 31, 2024 and 2023 and certain compliance requirements related to these transactions and balances included in the information provided to us by the Township.

The Board of Trustees and the management of the Township have agreed to and acknowledged that the procedures performed are appropriate to meet the intended purpose of providing assistance in the evaluation of the Township's receipts, disbursements and balances recorded in their cash-basis accounting records for the years ended December 31, 2024 and 2023, and certain compliance requirements related to these transactions and balances. No other party acknowledged the appropriateness of the procedures. This report may not be suitable for any other purpose. The procedures performed may not address all the items of interest to a user of the report and may not meet the needs of all users of the report and, as such, users are responsible for determining whether the procedures performed are appropriate for their purposes. The sufficiency of the procedures is solely the responsibility of the parties specified in the report. Consequently, we make no representation regarding the sufficiency of the procedures described below either for the purpose for which this report has been requested or for any other purpose.

For the purposes of performing these procedures, this report only describes exceptions exceeding \$10.

The procedures and the associated findings are as follows:

Cash and Investments

1. We recalculated the December 31, 2024 and December 31, 2023 bank reconciliations. We found no exceptions.
2. We agreed the January 1, 2023 beginning fund balances for each opinion unit recorded in the Fund Status Report to the December 31, 2022 balances in the prior year audited statements. The amounts did not agree as the prior audit adjustments were posted by the Township in 2025. We also agreed the January 1, 2024 beginning fund balances for each fund recorded in the Fund Status Report to the December 31, 2023 balances in the Fund Status Report. We found no exceptions.
3. We agreed the 2024 and 2023 adjusted UAN Balances and Adjusted Bank Balances as of December 31, 2024 and 2023 to the total fund cash balances reported in the Fund Status Report and the financial statements filed by the Township in the Hinkle System. The amounts agreed.

Cash and Investments (Continued)

4. We confirmed the December 31, 2024 bank account balances with the Township's financial institutions and Ohio Pooled Collateral System. We found no exceptions. We also agreed the confirmed balances to the amounts appearing in the December 31, 2024 bank reconciliation without exception.
5. We selected 5 reconciling debits (such as outstanding checks) from the December 31, 2024 bank reconciliation:
 - a. We traced each debit to the subsequent January bank statement. We found no exceptions.
 - b. We traced the amounts and dates to the check register, and determined the debits were dated prior to December 31. We found no exceptions.
6. We inspected the Fund Status Report to determine whether the Finding for Adjustment identified in the prior audit report due from the General Fund, payable to the Road and Bridge Fund, was properly posted to the ledgers and reflected in the fund balances in Procedure 2. The adjustment was not reflected in the fund balances in Procedure 2 due to the Township not posting the adjustment until 2025. We found no other exceptions.
7. We inspected investments held at December 31, 2024 and December 31, 2023 to determine that they:
 - a. Were of a type authorized by Ohio Rev. Code §§ 135.13, 135.14, 135.144 or 135.145. We found no exceptions.
 - b. Mature within the prescribed time limits noted in Ohio Rev. Code § 135.13 or 135.14. We found no exceptions.

Property Taxes and Intergovernmental Cash Receipts

1. We selected a total of 5 receipts from the *Statement of Semiannual Apportionment of Taxes* (SSAT), State Distribution Transaction Lists (DTL), and the Muskingum County Auditor's Check Disbursement Report for 2024 and a total of 5 from 2023:
 - a. We compared the amount from the above named reports to the amount recorded in the Receipt Register Report. The amounts agreed, except we found the Township posted Homestead and Rollback receipts from the State DTL at net rather than gross, therefore understating Intergovernmental revenue and the corresponding disbursement by \$95 in 2024 and \$45 in 2023. However, because we did not inspect all receipts, our report provides no assurance regarding whether or not other similar errors occurred.
 - b. We inspected the Receipt Register Report to determine these receipts were allocated to the proper funds as required by Ohio Rev. Code §§ 5705.05 and 5705.10. We found Homestead and Rollback receipts and fees were not allocated based on the respective SSAT. This resulted in an overstatement of Intergovernmental revenue of \$102, \$356 and \$38 in the General, Road and Bridge, and Road Improvement Special Revenue Funds, respectively, and an understatement of \$496 in the Fire Levy Special Revenue Fund. We brought this error to management's attention, and they have corrected their accounting records for these errors. Because we did not inspect all receipts, our report provides no assurance whether or not additional similar errors occurred.
 - c. We inspected the Receipt Register Report to determine whether the receipt was recorded in the proper year. The receipt was recorded in the proper year. We found no exceptions.
2. We inspected the Receipt Register Report to determine whether it included 2 real estate tax receipts for 2024 and 2023. The Receipt Register Report included the proper number of tax receipts for each year. We found no exceptions.

Debt

1. From the prior audit report, we observed an Equipment Financed Purchase Agreement was outstanding as of December 31, 2022. The outstanding balance is included in the "Summary Debt Table - Carry Forward Balance" column in the summary chart in procedure 3.
2. We inquired of management and inspected the Receipt Register Report and Payment Register Detail Report for evidence of debt issued during 2024 or 2023 or debt payment activity during 2024 or 2023. There were no new debt issuances.
3. From the summary of outstanding debt for 2024 and 2023 below:
 - a. We agreed the principal and interest payments from the related debt amortization schedules to Road and Bridge Fund payments reported in the Payment Register Detail Report and included the total principal payments for both years in the table below. We noted the Township did not classify payments between Principal Retirement and Interest and Other Fiscal Charges. We found no other exceptions.
 - b. We compared the date the debt service payments were due to the date the Township made the payments. We found no exceptions.
 - c. Based on the principal payments made, we agreed the outstanding balance to debt amortization schedule and included the outstanding balance in the summary table below. We found no exceptions.
 - d. For any outstanding debt listed in the table below, we obtained the debt agreements and confirmed the Township was in compliance with its debt covenants. We found no exceptions.

Summary Debt Table					
Debt Issued	Carry Forward Balance 1/1/2023	New Issue 2023	New Issue 2024	Total Principal Payments 2023/2024	Outstanding Balance 12/31/2024
Equipment Financed Purchase Agreement	\$163,706	\$0	\$0	\$51,918	\$111,788

Payroll Cash Disbursements

1. We selected 1 payroll check for 5 employees from 2024 and 1 payroll check for 5 employees from 2023 from the Wage Detail Report and:
 - a. We compared the hours and pay rate, or salary recorded in the Wage Detail Report to supporting documentation (timecard, legislatively or approved rate or salary). We found no exceptions.
 - b. We inspected the fund and account codes to which the check was posted to determine the posting was allowable based on the employees' duties as documented in the employees' personnel files and minute record. We found no exceptions.
 - c. We confirmed the payment was posted to the proper year. We found no exceptions.
2. We selected 2 new employees from 2024 and:
 - a. We inspected the employees' personnel file for the Retirement system, Federal, State & Local income tax withholding authorization.
 - b. We agreed the items in a. above to the Employee General Information Report. We found no exceptions.

Payroll Cash Disbursements (Continued)

3. We inspected the last remittance of tax and retirement withholdings for the year ended December 31, 2024 to confirm remittances were timely paid, and if the amounts paid agreed to the amounts withheld, plus the employer's share where applicable, during the final withholding period of 2024. We observed the following:

Withholding (plus employer share, where applicable)	Date Due	Date Paid	Amount Due	Amount Paid
Federal income taxes & Medicare (and social security, for employees not enrolled in pension system)	January 31, 2025	December 31, 2024	\$501	\$501
State income taxes	January 31, 2025	December 31, 2024	\$461	\$461
OPERS retirement	January 30, 2025	December 31, 2024	\$2,105	\$2,105

We found no exceptions.

4. We compared total gross pay for the fiscal officer and each board of trustees for 2024 and 2023 to the compensation permitted by Ohio Rev. Code §§ 507.09 and 505.24, respectively. Their pay did not exceed the Ohio Rev. Code §§ 507.09 and 505.24 permitted amounts.

Non-Payroll Cash Disbursements

We selected 10 disbursements from the Payment Register Detail Report for the year ended December 31, 2024 and 10 from the year ended 2023 and determined whether:

- a. The disbursements were for a proper public purpose. We found no exceptions.
- b. The check number, date, payee name and amount recorded on the returned, canceled check and related bank statement agreed to the check number, date, payee name and amount recorded in the Payment Register Detail Report and to the names and amounts on the supporting invoices. We found no exceptions.
- c. The payment was posted to a fund consistent with the restricted purpose for which the fund's cash can be used. We found no exceptions.
- d. The fiscal officer certified disbursements requiring certification or issued a *Then and Now Certificate*, as required by Ohio Rev. Code § 5705.41(D). We found no exceptions.

Compliance – Budgetary

1. Ohio Rev. Code § 5705.41(B) prohibits expenditures (disbursements plus contract commitments including outstanding encumbrances) from exceeding appropriations. We compared total expenditures to total approved appropriations (Ohio Rev. Code §§ 5705.38 and 5705.40) plus any carryover appropriations for the years ended December 31, 2024 and 2023 for the General, Road and Bridge and Cemetery Funds as recorded in the Appropriation Status Report. Expenditures did not exceed appropriations.
2. We inspected the Cash Summary by Fund Report for the years ended December 31, 2024 and 2023 for negative cash fund balances. Ohio Rev. Code § 5705.10(l) provides that money paid into a fund must be used for the purposes for which such fund is established. As a result, a negative fund cash balance indicates that money from one fund was used to cover the expenses of another. No funds had a negative cash fund balance.

Sunshine Law Compliance

1. We obtained and inspected the Township's Public Records Policy to determine the policy was in accordance with Ohio Rev. Code §§ 149.43(E)(2) and 149.43(B)(7)(c) and did not limit the number of responses that may be made to a particular person, limit the number of responses during a specified period of time, or establish a fixed period of time before it will respond unless that period is less than eight hours. We found no exceptions.
2. We selected all public records requests from the engagement period and inspected each request to determine the following:
 - a. The Township was compliant and responded to the request in accordance with their adopted policy as required by Ohio Rev. Code § 149.43(B)(1). We found no exceptions.
 - b. The Township did not have any denied public records requests during the engagement period.
 - c. The Township did not have any public records requests with redactions during the engagement period.
3. We inquired with Township management and determined that the Township did not have a records retention schedule during the engagement period and therefore could not make it readily available to the public as required by Ohio Rev. Code § 149.43(B)(2).
4. We inquired with Township management and determined that the Township did not have written evidence that the Public Records Policy was provided to the records custodian/manager as required by Ohio Rev. Code § 149.43(E)(2).
5. We inquired with Township management and determined that the Township did not have a policy manual during the engagement period therefore the public records policy could not be included as required by Ohio Rev. Code § 149.43(E)(2).
6. We inquired with Township management and determined that the Township did not have their Public Records Policy displayed conspicuously in all branches of the Township as required by Ohio Rev. Code § 149.43(E)(2).
7. We inquired with Township management and determined that the Township did not have any applications for record disposal submitted to the Records Commission during the engagement period.
8. We inspected individual proof of attendance and determined whether each elected official in accordance with Ohio Rev. Code § 149.43(E)(1) (or his/her designee) successfully attended a certified three-hour Public Records Training for each term of office as required by Ohio Rev. Code § 109.43(B). We found two elected officials with terms ending during the engagement period had not attended the required training as required by Ohio Rev. Code § 109.43(B).
9. We inspected the public notices for the public meetings held during the engagement period and determined the Township notified the general public and news media of when and where meetings during the engagement period were to be held as required by Ohio Rev. Code § 121.22(F). We found no exceptions.

Sunshine Law Compliance (Continued)

10. We inspected the minutes of public meetings during the engagement period in accordance with Ohio Rev. Code § 121.22(C) and determined whether they were:
- Prepared – a file is created following the date of the meeting
 - Filed – placed with similar documents in an organized manner
 - Maintained - retained, at a minimum, for the engagement period
 - Open to public inspection – available for public viewing or request.

We found no exceptions.

11. We inspected the minutes from the engagement period in accordance with Ohio Rev. Code § 121.22(G) and determined the following:
- Executive sessions were only held at regular or special meetings.
 - The purpose for the meetings and going into an executive session (when applicable) correlated with one of the matters listed in Ohio Rev. Code § 121.22(G).
 - Formal governing board actions were adopted in open meetings.

We found no exceptions.

Other Compliance

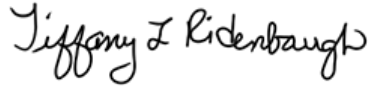
- Ohio Rev. Code § 117.38 requires Townships to file their financial information in the HINKLE system within 60 days after the close of the fiscal year. This statute also permits the Auditor of State to extend the deadline for filing a financial report and establish terms and conditions for any such extension. Auditor of State established policies regarding the filing of complete financial statements, as defined in AOS Bulletin 2015-007 in the Hinkle System. We confirmed the Township filed their complete financial statements, as defined by AOS Bulletin 2015-007 and Auditor of State established policy, within the allotted timeframe for the years ended December 31, 2024 and 2023 in the Hinkle system. We found no exceptions.
- We inspected the Fiscal Integrity Act Portal (<http://www.ohioauditor.gov/fiscalintegrity/default.html>) to determine whether the fiscal officer obtained the training required by Ohio Rev. Code § 507.12. We noted the Fiscal Officer, whose term ended on March 31, 2024 did not obtain the required 12 hours of training.

We were engaged by the Township to perform this agreed-upon procedures engagement and conducted our engagement in accordance with the attestation standards established by the AICPA and the Comptroller General of the United States' *Government Auditing Standards*. We were not engaged to, and did not conduct an examination or review engagement, the objective of which would be the expression of an opinion or conclusion, respectively, on the Township's receipts, disbursements, balances and compliance with certain laws and regulations. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion or conclusion. Had we performed additional procedures, other matters might have come to our attention that would have been reported to you.

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We are required to be independent of the Township and to meet our ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the ethical requirements established by the Comptroller General of the United States' *Government Auditing Standards* related to our agreed upon procedures engagement.

KEITH FABER
Ohio Auditor of State

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tiffany L Ridenbaugh". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "T".

Tiffany L Ridenbaugh, CPA, CFE, CGFM
Chief Deputy Auditor

July 17, 2025

OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE KEITH FABER



HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP

MUSKINGUM COUNTY

AUDITOR OF STATE OF OHIO CERTIFICATION

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



Certified for Release 7/29/2025

65 East State Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215
Phone: 614-466-4514 or 800-282-0370

This report is a matter of public record and is available online at
www.ohioauditor.gov