



OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE
KEITH FABER



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BASIC AUDIT REPORT

Washington Township
Highland County
Hillsboro, Ohio 45133

We have completed certain procedures in accordance with Ohio Rev. Code Section 117.01(G) to the accounting records and related documents of the Washington Township, Highland County, (the Township) for the years ended December 31, 2021 and 2020.

Our procedures were designed solely to satisfy the audit requirements of Ohio Rev. Code Section 117.11(A). Because our procedures were not designed to opine on the Township's financial statements, we did not follow *generally accepted auditing standards*. We do not provide any assurance on the Township's financial statements, transactions or balances for the years ended December 31, 2021 and 2020.

The Township's management is responsible for preparing and maintaining its accounting records and related documents. Our responsibility under Ohio Rev. Code Section 117.11(A) is to examine, analyze and inspect these records and documents.

Based on the results of our procedures, we found the following significant compliance or accounting issues to report.

Current Year Observations

1. **Ohio Rev. Code §§ 109.43(B) and 149.43(E)(1)** require all state and local elected officials, or their designees, to attend 3 hours of training on Ohio's Public Records Laws during each term of office. The training received must be certified by the Ohio Attorney General. Proof of completion of training must include documentation either from the Attorney General's Office or from another entity certified by the Attorney General to provide the training to the elected official or his/her designee. Attendees who successfully complete the training will receive a certificate to serve as proof of training.

None of the Township's elected officials with terms ending in 2021, during their term of office, attended a required Certified Public Records Training or have an appropriate designee attend a training, due to deficiencies in internal controls over public record laws training procedures and monitoring. This could result in improper education of public offices regarding the offices' duties related to public records requests as well as improper withholding of information from stakeholders.

The elected officials, or their designee, should, during their term of office, attend public records training and maintain proof of completion of the training.

2. **Ohio Rev. Code §149.43 (E)** states that the Ohio Attorney General shall develop and provide to all public offices a model public records policy for responding to public records requests in compliance with Ohio Rev. Code 149.43 in order to provide guidance to public offices in developing their own public record policies.

The Public Records Policy must adhere to the following requirements:

- The Township is required to distribute their Public Records Policy to the employee who is the records custodian/manager or otherwise has custody of the records of that office.
- Public offices must create a poster describing the public records policy. The poster is required to be posted in a conspicuous place in the public office or in the branches of the public office.
- If the public office has an employee policies and procedures manual, the policy must be included in that manual.

The Township did not adopt a public records policy. A public records policy is required to ensure the Township is in compliance with all the public records laws. All Township employees need to be aware of the public record laws and what procedures to follow when a member of the public requests to examine public records.

We recommend the Township adopt a public records policy that is modeled after the example published by the Ohio Attorney General.

3. **Ohio Rev. Code 149.43(B)(2)** provides that every public office to facilitate broader access to public records, a public office or the person responsible for public records shall organize and maintain public records in a manner that they can be made available for inspection or copying in accordance with division (B) of this section. A public office also shall have available a copy of its current records retention schedule at a location readily available to the public.

Due to deficiencies in public records procedures and monitoring, the Township does not have a records retention schedule. Failure to establish a records retention schedule could result in the destruction of important Township documents. The Township should adopt a records retention schedule.

4. **Ohio Rev. Code § 117.38** provides that cash-basis entities must file annual reports with the Auditor of State within 60 days of the fiscal year end. The Auditor of State may prescribe by rule or guidelines the forms for these reports. However, if the Auditor of State has not prescribed a reporting form, the public office shall submit its report on the form used by the public office. Any public office not filing the report by the required date shall pay a penalty of twenty-five dollars for each day the report remains un-filed, not to exceed seven hundred fifty dollars. The Auditor of State may waive these penalties, upon the filing of the past due financial report.

The Township filed its 2020 financial statements on September 7, 2022, which was not within the allotted timeframe.

The Fiscal Officer should file the Township's annual financial reports, in the proper format, with the Auditor of State within 60 days of the fiscal year end. Further, the Township should establish an accounting system capable of accurate financial reporting. Also, all the Township's officials should obtain the necessary training needed to obtain an understanding in accounting information and reporting.

5. During 2020 and 2021, the Township did not properly post interest earned from Certificates of Deposit and Checking Account in the amount of \$853. This caused the fund balance and receipts to be understated by the same amount. The Township made these adjustments to their accounting system.

The Township should verify that all receipts are accounted for during the reconciling process.

6. The Township did not properly post a Finding for Adjustment in the Prior audit in the amount of \$29,029 reducing the General Fund Balance and increasing the Gas Tax Fund Balance. This amount has been corrected in the Township's accounting system.

The Township should properly post all adjustments as required.



Keith Faber
Auditor of State
Columbus, Ohio

November 30, 2022

OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE KEITH FABER



WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP

HIGHLAND 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 12/13/2022

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