

BENTON TOWNSHIP

OTTAWA COUNTY

Regular Audit

For the Years Ended December 31, 2022 and 2021





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Board of Trustees
Benton Township
1670 N. Walker Street
Graytown, OH 43432-9800

We have reviewed the *Independent Auditor's Report* of the Benton Township, Ottawa County, prepared by Charles E. Harris & Associates, Inc., for the audit period January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2022. Based upon this review, we have accepted these reports in lieu of the audit required by Section 117.11, Revised Code. The Auditor of State did not audit the accompanying financial statements and, accordingly, we are unable to express, and do not express an opinion on them.

Our review was made in reference to the applicable sections of legislative criteria, as reflected by the Ohio Constitution, and the Revised Code, policies, procedures and guidelines of the Auditor of State, regulations and grant requirements. The Benton Township is responsible for compliance with these laws and regulations.

Keith Faber
Auditor of State
Columbus, Ohio

August 18, 2023

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Benton Township
Ottawa County
For the Years Ended December 31, 2022 and 2021

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Benton Township
Ottawa County
1670 North Walker Street
Graytown, Ohio 43432-9800

To the Board of Trustees:

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Unmodified and Adverse Opinions

We have audited the financial statements of Benton Township, Ottawa County, Ohio (the Township), which comprise the cash balances, receipts and disbursements for each governmental fund type as of and for the years ended December 31, 2022 and 2021, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Unmodified Opinion on Regulatory Basis of Accounting

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the cash balances, receipts and disbursements for each governmental fund type as of and for the years ended December 31, 2022 and 2021, and the related notes to the financial statements, in accordance with the financial reporting provisions which Ohio Revised Code Section 117.38 and Ohio Administrative Code Section 117-2-03(C) permit, described in Note 2.

Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles

In our opinion, because of the significance of the matter discussed in the *Basis for Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles* section of our report, the accompanying financial statements do not present fairly, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, the financial position of the Township, as of December 31, 2022 and 2021, or the changes in financial position, thereof for the years then ended.

Basis for Opinions

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS) and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Township, and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinions.

Basis for Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles

As described in Note 2 of the financial statements, the financial statements are prepared by Township on the basis of the financial reporting provisions of Ohio Revised Code Section 117.38 and Ohio Administrative Code Section 117-2-03(C), which is an accounting basis other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP), to satisfy these requirements. The effects on the financial statements of the variances between the regulatory basis of accounting described in Note 2 and accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, although not reasonably determinable, are presumed to be material and pervasive.

Emphasis of Matter

As discussed in Note 12 to the financial statements for 2022 and 2021, the financial impact of COVID-19 and the ensuing emergency measures will impact subsequent periods of the Township. We did not modify our opinions regarding this matter.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the financial reporting provisions Ohio Revised Code Section 117.38 and Ohio Administrative Code Section 117-2-03(C) permit. Management is also responsible for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Township's ability to continue as a going concern for twelve months beyond the financial statement date, including any currently known information that may raise substantial doubt shortly thereafter.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinions. 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 the financial audit standards in the Comptroller General of the United States' *Government Auditing Standards* will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. 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, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

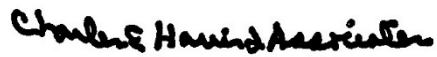
In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS and *Government Auditing Standards*, we

- exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Township's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Township's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated June 26, 2023, on our consideration of the Township'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. The purpose of that report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the Township's internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the Township's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.



Charles E. Harris & Associates, Inc.
June 26, 2023

**BENTON TOWNSHIP
OTTAWA COUNTY
COMBINED STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS
AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES - REGULATORY CASH BASIS
ALL GOVERNMENTAL FUND TYPES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2022**

	<u>Governmental Fund Types</u>			Totals (Memorandum Only)
	<u>General</u>	<u>Special Revenue</u>	<u>Capital Projects</u>	
Cash Receipts				
Property and Other Local Taxes	\$ 442,160	\$ 163,528	-	\$ 605,688
Charges for Services	-	7,260	-	7,260
Licenses, Permits and Fees	7,998	31,195	-	39,193
Intergovernmental	55,905	318,855	-	374,760
Earnings on Investments	13,971	2,278	-	16,249
Miscellaneous	650	13,510	-	14,160
<i>Total Cash Receipts</i>	<u>520,684</u>	<u>536,626</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,057,310</u>
Cash Disbursements				
Current:				
General Government	272,287	-	-	272,287
Public Safety	132,717	25	-	132,742
Public Works	14,583	287,429	-	302,012
Health	11,467	57,568	-	69,035
Conservation-Recreation	22,146	20,000	-	42,146
Capital Outlay	-	4,382	-	4,382
Debt Service:				
Principal Retirement	-	22,754	-	22,754
<i>Total Cash Disbursements</i>	<u>453,200</u>	<u>392,158</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>845,358</u>
<i>Net Change in Fund Cash Balances</i>	67,484	144,468	-	211,952
<i>Fund Cash Balances, January 1</i>	<u>258,728</u>	<u>684,390</u>	<u>\$ 2,000</u>	<u>945,118</u>
<i>Fund Cash Balances, December 31</i>	<u>\$ 326,212</u>	<u>\$ 828,858</u>	<u>\$ 2,000</u>	<u>\$ 1,157,070</u>

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

Benton Township
Ottawa County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

Note 1 – Reporting Entity

The constitution and laws of the State of Ohio establish the rights and privileges of the Benton Township, Ottawa County, (the Township) as a body corporate and politic. A publicly elected three-member Board of Trustees directs the Township. The Township provides road and bridge maintenance, cemetery maintenance, fire protection contracted and emergency medical services contracted. Benton Township contracts with the Allen-Clay Fire Dept, Harris Twp and Portage Twp Fire Dept to provide fire services Allen Clay, Harris Twp and Mid County Ems to provide ambulance services.

Public Entity Risk Pool

The Township participates in the Ohio Township Association Risk Management Authority (OTARMA), and Ohio Group Rating Plan (GRP), both public entity risk pools. Note 6 to the financial statements provides additional information for these entities.

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

Note 2 - Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Basis of Presentation

The Township’s financial statements consist of a combined statement of receipts, disbursements and change in fund balances (regulatory cash basis) for all government fund types, which is organized on a fund type basis.

Fund Accounting

The Township uses fund accounting to maintain its financial records during the year. A fund is defined as a fiscal and accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts. The funds of the Township are presented below:

General Fund The general fund accounts for and reports all financial resources not accounted for and reported in another fund. The general fund balance is available to the Township for any purpose provided it is expended or transferred according to the general laws of Ohio.

Special Revenue Funds These funds account for and report the proceeds of specific revenue sources that are restricted or committed to expenditure for specified purposes other than debt service or capital projects. The Township had the following significant Special Revenue Funds:

Gasoline Tax Fund The gasoline tax fund accounts for and reports that portion of the State gasoline tax restricted for maintenance and repair of roads within the Township.

Road and Bridge Fund The road and bridge fund accounts for and reports receipts of property tax money restricted for the purpose of constructing, maintaining and repairing Township roads and bridges.

Benton Township
Ottawa County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

Note 2 - Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

Capital Project Funds These funds account for and report financial resources that are restricted, committed, or assigned to expenditure for capital outlays, including the acquisition or construction of capital facilities and other capital assets. The Township's only capital projects fund is a public works commission project fund. This fund had no activity in 2022.

Basis of Accounting

These financial statements follow the accounting basis permitted by the financial reporting provisions of Ohio Revised Code Section 117.38 and Ohio Administrative Code Section 117-2-03(C). This basis is similar to the cash receipts and disbursements accounting basis. The Board 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 include adequate disclosure of material matters, as the financial reporting provisions of Ohio Revised Code Section 117.38 and Ohio Administrative Code Section 117-2-03(C) permit.

Budgetary Process

The Ohio Revised Code requires that each fund be budgeted annually.

Appropriations Budgetary expenditures (that is, disbursements and encumbrances) may not exceed appropriations at the fund, function or object level of control, and appropriations may not exceed estimated resources. The Board of Trustees must annually approve appropriation measures and subsequent amendments. Unencumbered appropriations lapse at year end.

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

Encumbrances The Ohio Revised Code requires the Township to reserve (encumber) appropriations when individual commitments are made. Encumbrances outstanding at year end are carried over, and need not be re-appropriated.

A summary of 2022 budgetary activity appears in Note 3.

Capital Assets

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

Accumulated Leave

In certain circumstances, such as upon leaving employment, employees are entitled to cash payments for unused leave. The financial statements do not include a liability for unpaid leave.

Benton Township
Ottawa County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

Note 2 - Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

Deposits and Investments

The Township's accounting basis includes investments as assets. This basis does not record disbursements for investment purchases or receipts for investment sales. This basis records gains or losses at the time of sale as receipts or disbursements, respectively.

Fund Balance

Fund balance is divided into five classifications based primarily on the extent to which the Township must observe constraints imposed upon the use of its governmental-fund resources. The classifications are as follows:

Nonspendable The Township classifies assets as nonspendable when legally or contractually required to maintain the amounts intact. For regulatory purposes, nonspendable fund balance includes unclaimed monies that are required to be held for five years before they may be utilized by the Township.

Restricted Fund balance is restricted when constraints placed on the use of resources are either externally imposed by creditors (such as through debt covenants), grantors, contributors, or laws or regulations of other governments; or is imposed by law through constitutional provisions.

Committed Trustees can commit amounts via formal action (resolution). The Township must adhere to these commitments unless the Trustees amend the resolution. Committed fund balance also incorporates contractual obligations to the extent that existing resources in the fund have been specifically committed to satisfy contractual requirements.

Assigned Assigned fund balances are intended for specific purposes but do not meet the criteria to be classified as restricted or committed. For regulatory purposes, assigned fund balance in general fund is limited to encumbrances outstanding at year end.

Unassigned Unassigned fund balance is the residual classification for the general fund and includes amounts not included in the other classifications. In other governmental funds, the unassigned classification is used only to report a deficit balance.

The Township applies restricted resources first when expenditures are incurred for purposes for which either restricted or unrestricted (committed, assigned, and unassigned) amounts are available. Similarly, within unrestricted fund balance, committed amounts are reduced first followed by assigned, and then unassigned amounts when expenditures are incurred for purposes for which amounts in any of the unrestricted fund balance classifications could be used.

For regulatory purposes, limited disclosure to fund balance is included in Note 11.

Benton Township
Ottawa County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

Note 3 – Budgetary Activity

Budgetary activity for the year ending December 31, 2022 follows:

Fund Type	2022 Budgeted vs. Actual Receipts		Variance
	Budgeted	Actual	
	Receipts	Receipts	
General	\$ 559,700	\$ 520,684	\$ (39,016)
Special Revenue	362,180	536,626	174,446

Fund Type	2022 Budgeted vs. Actual Budgetary Basis Disbursements		
	Appropriation	Budgetary	Variance
	Authority	Disbursements	
General	\$ 654,508	\$ 581,389	
Special Revenue	790,107	499,161	290,946

Note 4 – Deposits and Investments

To improve cash management, cash received by the Township is pooled. Monies for all funds are maintained in this pool. The Ohio Revised Code prescribes allowable deposits. A summary of the Township’s deposit accounts are as follows:

	2022
Demand deposits	\$ 49,792
STAR Ohio	1,107,278
Total deposits and investments	\$ 1,157,070

The Township does not use a separate payroll clearing account. The expenditures included in the accompanying financial statements reflect net payroll plus all remitted payroll withholdings. At December 31, 2022, the Township did not have any unremitted employee payroll withholdings.

Deposits

Deposits are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or collateralized by securities specifically pledged by the financial institution to the Township or collateralized through the Ohio Pooled Collateral System (OPCS), a collateral pool of eligible securities deposited with a qualified trustee and pledged to the Treasurer of State to secure the repayment of all public monies deposited in the financial institution.

Investments

Investments in STAR Ohio and mutual funds are not evidenced by securities that exist in physical or book entry form.

Benton Township
Ottawa County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

Note 5 – Property Taxes

Real property taxes become a lien on January 1 preceding the October 1 date for which the Trustees adopted tax rates. The State Board of Tax Equalization adjusts these rates for inflation. Property taxes are also reduced for applicable non-business, owner occupancy, and homestead exemption credits and/or homestead and rollback deductions. The financial statements include these credits and/or deduction amounts the State pays as Intergovernmental Receipts. 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.

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

Note 6 – Risk Management

Workers' Compensation

The Township participates in the Ohio Group Rating Plan (GRP) for worker's compensation. The pool's business and affairs are conducted by a twenty-six member Board of Trustees consisting of fifteen mayors, two council members, three administrators, three finance directors, and three law directors which are voted on by the members for staggered two-year terms. The Executive Director of the Ohio Municipal League serves as the coordinator of the Program. Each year the participants pay an enrollment fee to the program to cover the costs of administering the program.

Risk Pool Membership

The Township is a member of the Ohio Township Association Risk Management Authority (The Pool). The Pool assumes the risk of loss up to the limits of the Township's policy. The Pool covers the following risks:

- General liability and casualty
- Public official's liability
- Cyber
- Law enforcement liability
- Automobile liability
- Vehicles
- Property
- Equipment breakdown

The Pool reported the following summary of assets and actuarially-measured liabilities available to pay those liabilities as of December 31 (the latest information available):

	<u>2021</u>
Cash and investments	\$34,880,599
Actuarial liabilities	10,601,444

Benton Township
Ottawa County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

Note 7 - Defined Benefit Pension Plan

Ohio Public Retirement System

The Township’s employees belong to the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS). OPERS is a cost-sharing, multiple-employer plan. The Ohio Revised Code prescribes the plans’ benefits, which include postretirement healthcare and survivor and disability benefits.

The Ohio Revised Code also prescribes contribution rates. OPERS members contributed 10% of their gross salaries and the Township contributed an amount equaling 14% of participants’ gross salaries. The Township has paid all contributions required through December 31, 2022.

Note 8 – Postemployment Benefits

OPERS offer cost-sharing, multiple-employer defined benefit postemployment plans, which include multiple health care plans including medical coverage, prescription drug coverage, deposits to a Health Reimbursement Arrangement, and Medicare Part B premium reimbursements, to qualifying benefit recipients. The portion of employer contributions allocated to health care for OPERS members in the traditional pension plan and combined plan was 0% during calendar year 2022. The portion of employer contributions allocated to health care for OPERS members in the member-directed plan was 4% during calendar year 2022.

Effective January 1, 2022, OPERS discontinued the group plans currently offered to non-Medicare retirees and re-employed retirees. Instead, eligible non-Medicare retirees will select an individual medical plan. OPERS will provide a subsidy or allowance via an HRA allowance to those retirees who meet health care eligibility requirements. Retirees will be able to seek reimbursement for plan premiums and other qualified medical expenses.

Note 9 – Debt

Debt outstanding at December 31, 2022, was as follows:

	Principal	Interest Rate
OPWC #CE46Q - Benton TR 77, Allen TR 7 & 214, Carroll TR 90 & 91	\$23,600	0.00%

The OPWC CE46Q loan relates to a joint road resurfacing project.

Amortization

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

Year Ending December 31:	OPWC Loans
2023	\$15,657
2024	7,943
Total	\$23,600

Benton Township
Ottawa County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

Note 10 – Contingent Liabilities

Management believes there are no pending claims or lawsuits.

Note 11 – Fund Balances

Encumbrances are commitments related to unperformed contracts for goods or services. Encumbrance accounting is utilized to the extent necessary to assure effective budgetary control and accountability and to facilitate effective cash planning and control. At year end, the balances of these amounts were as follows:

<u>Fund Balances</u>	<u>General</u>	<u>Special Revenue</u>	<u>Total</u>
Outstanding Encumbrances	\$ 128,189	\$ 107,003	\$ 235,192

The fund balance of special revenue funds is either restricted or committed. The fund balance of capital projects funds is restricted, committed, or assigned. These restricted, committed, or assigned amounts in the special revenue and capital projects funds include the outstanding encumbrances. In the general fund, outstanding encumbrances are considered assigned.

Note 12 – COVID-19

The United States and the State of Ohio declared a state of emergency in March of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Ohio's state of emergency ended in June, 2021 while the national state of emergency continues. During 2022, the Township received COVID-19 funding. The financial impact of COVID-19 and the continuing emergency measures will impact subsequent periods of the Township.

**BENTON TOWNSHIP
OTTAWA COUNTY
COMBINED STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS
AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES - REGULATORY CASH BASIS
ALL GOVERNMENTAL FUND TYPES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2021**

	<u>Governmental Fund Types</u>			Totals (Memorandum Only)
	<u>General</u>	<u>Special Revenue</u>	<u>Capital Projects</u>	
Cash Receipts				
Property and Other Local Taxes	\$ 405,047	\$ 150,286	-	\$ 555,333
Charges for Services	-	3,844	-	3,844
Licenses, Permits and Fees	12,644	38,336	-	50,980
Fines and Forfeitures	-	205	-	205
Intergovernmental	72,316	321,731	-	394,047
Earnings on Investments	581	66	-	647
Miscellaneous	788	17,272	-	18,060
<i>Total Cash Receipts</i>	<u>491,376</u>	<u>531,740</u>	-	<u>1,023,116</u>
Cash Disbursements				
Current:				
General Government	177,437	-	-	177,437
Public Safety	125,355	-	-	125,355
Public Works	44,280	312,981	-	357,261
Health	11,310	51,231	-	62,541
Conservation-Recreation	16,328	-	-	16,328
Capital Outlay	166,547	9,619	-	176,166
Debt Service:				
Principal Retirement	10,000	33,845	-	43,845
<i>Total Cash Disbursements</i>	<u>551,257</u>	<u>407,676</u>	-	<u>958,933</u>
<i>Excess of Receipts Over (Under) Disbursements</i>	(59,881)	124,064	-	64,183
Other Financing Receipts (Disbursements)				
Sale of Capital Assets	18,540	-	-	18,540
<i>Total Other Financing Receipts (Disbursements)</i>	<u>18,540</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>18,540</u>
<i>Net Change in Fund Cash Balances</i>	(41,341)	124,064	-	82,723
<i>Fund Cash Balances, January 1</i>	<u>300,069</u>	<u>560,326</u>	<u>\$ 2,000</u>	<u>862,395</u>
<i>Fund Cash Balances, December 31</i>	<u>\$ 258,728</u>	<u>\$ 684,390</u>	<u>\$ 2,000</u>	<u>\$ 945,118</u>

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

Benton Township
Ottawa County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2021

Note 1 – Reporting Entity

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Note 2 - Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

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Benton Township
Ottawa County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2021

Note 2 - Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

Capital Project Funds These funds account for and report financial resources that are restricted, committed, or assigned to expenditure for capital outlays, including the acquisition or construction of capital facilities and other capital assets. The Township's only capital projects fund is a public works commission project fund. This fund had no activity in 2021.

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

Encumbrances The Ohio Revised Code requires the Township to reserve (encumber) appropriations when individual commitments are made. Encumbrances outstanding at year end are carried over, and need not be re-appropriated.

A summary of 2021 budgetary activity appears in Note 3.

Capital Assets

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

Accumulated Leave

In certain circumstances, such as upon leaving employment, employees are entitled to cash payments for unused leave. The financial statements do not include a liability for unpaid leave.

Benton Township
Ottawa County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2021

Note 2 - Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

Deposits and Investments

The Township's accounting basis includes investments as assets. This basis does not record disbursements for investment purchases or receipts for investment sales. This basis records gains or losses at the time of sale as receipts or disbursements, respectively.

Fund Balance

Fund balance is divided into five classifications based primarily on the extent to which the Township must observe constraints imposed upon the use of its governmental-fund resources. The classifications are as follows:

Nonspendable The Township classifies assets as nonspendable when legally or contractually required to maintain the amounts intact. For regulatory purposes, nonspendable fund balance includes unclaimed monies that are required to be held for five years before they may be utilized by the Township.

Restricted Fund balance is restricted when constraints placed on the use of resources are either externally imposed by creditors (such as through debt covenants), grantors, contributors, or laws or regulations of other governments; or is imposed by law through constitutional provisions.

Committed Trustees can commit amounts via formal action (resolution). The Township must adhere to these commitments unless the Trustees amend the resolution. Committed fund balance also incorporates contractual obligations to the extent that existing resources in the fund have been specifically committed to satisfy contractual requirements.

Assigned Assigned fund balances are intended for specific purposes but do not meet the criteria to be classified as restricted or committed. For regulatory purposes, assigned fund balance in general fund is limited to encumbrances outstanding at year end.

Unassigned Unassigned fund balance is the residual classification for the general fund and includes amounts not included in the other classifications. In other governmental funds, the unassigned classification is used only to report a deficit balance.

The Township applies restricted resources first when expenditures are incurred for purposes for which either restricted or unrestricted (committed, assigned, and unassigned) amounts are available. Similarly, within unrestricted fund balance, committed amounts are reduced first followed by assigned, and then unassigned amounts when expenditures are incurred for purposes for which amounts in any of the unrestricted fund balance classifications could be used.

For regulatory purposes, limited disclosure to fund balance is included in Note 11.

Benton Township
Ottawa County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2021

Note 3 – Budgetary Activity

Budgetary activity for the year ending December 31, 2021 follows:

2021 Budgeted vs. Actual Receipts			
Fund Type	Budgeted Receipts	Actual Receipts	Variance
General	\$ 560,000	\$ 509,916	\$ (50,084)
Special Revenue	318,430	531,740	213,310

2021 Budgeted vs. Actual Budgetary Basis Disbursements			
Fund Type	Appropriation Authority	Budgetary Disbursements	Variance
General	\$ 688,338	\$ 566,865	\$ 121,473
Special Revenue	589,725	409,013	180,712

Note 4 – Deposits and Investments

To improve cash management, cash received by the Township is pooled. Monies for all funds are maintained in this pool. The Ohio Revised Code prescribes allowable deposits. A summary of the Township’s deposit accounts are as follows:

	2021
Demand deposits	\$ 254,000
STAR Ohio	691,118
Total deposits and investments	\$ 945,118

The Township does not use a separate payroll clearing account. The expenditures included in the accompanying financial statements reflect net payroll plus all remitted payroll withholdings. At December 31, 2021, the Township did not have any unremitted employee payroll withholdings.

Deposits

Deposits are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or collateralized by securities specifically pledged by the financial institution to the Township or collateralized through the Ohio Pooled Collateral System (OPCS), a collateral pool of eligible securities deposited with a qualified trustee and pledged to the Treasurer of State to secure the repayment of all public monies deposited in the financial institution.

Investments

Investments in STAR Ohio and mutual funds are not evidenced by securities that exist in physical or book entry form.

Benton Township
Ottawa County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2021

Note 5 – Property Taxes

Real property taxes become a lien on January 1 preceding the October 1 date for which the Trustees adopted tax rates. The State Board of Tax Equalization adjusts these rates for inflation. Property taxes are also reduced for applicable non-business, owner occupancy, and homestead exemption credits and/or homestead and rollback deductions. The financial statements include these credits and/or deduction amounts the State pays as Intergovernmental Receipts. 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.

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

Note 6 – Risk Management

Workers' Compensation

The Township participates in the Ohio Group Rating Plan (GRP) for worker's compensation. The pool's business and affairs are conducted by a twenty-six member Board of Trustees consisting of fifteen mayors, two council members, three administrators, three finance directors, and three law directors which are voted on by the members for staggered two-year terms. The Executive Director of the Ohio Municipal League serves as the coordinator of the Program. Each year the participants pay an enrollment fee to the program to cover the costs of administering the program.

Risk Pool Membership

The Township is a member of the Ohio Township Association Risk Management Authority (The Pool). The Pool assumes the risk of loss up to the limits of the Township's policy. The Pool covers the following risks:

- General liability and casualty
- Public official's liability
- Cyber
- Law enforcement liability
- Automobile liability
- Vehicles
- Property
- Equipment breakdown

The Pool reported the following summary of assets and actuarially-measured liabilities available to pay those liabilities as of December 31:

	2021
Cash and investments	\$34,880,599
Actuarial liabilities	10,601,444

Benton Township
Ottawa County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2021

Note 7 - Defined Benefit Pension Plan

Ohio Public Retirement System

The Township’s employees belong to the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS). OPERS is a cost-sharing, multiple-employer plan. The Ohio Revised Code prescribes the plans’ benefits, which include postretirement healthcare and survivor and disability benefits.

The Ohio Revised Code also prescribes contribution rates. OPERS members contributed 10% of their gross salaries and the Township contributed an amount equaling 14% of participants’ gross salaries. The Township has paid all contributions required through December 31, 2021.

Note 8 – Postemployment Benefits

OPERS offer cost-sharing, multiple-employer defined benefit postemployment plans, which include multiple health care plans including medical coverage, prescription drug coverage, deposits to a Health Reimbursement Arrangement, and Medicare Part B premium reimbursements, to qualifying benefit recipients. The portion of employer contributions allocated to health care for OPERS members in the traditional pension plan and combined plan was 0% during calendar year 2021. The portion of employer contributions allocated to health care for OPERS members in the member-directed plan was 4% during calendar year 2021.

Note 9 – Debt

Debt outstanding at December 31, 2021, was as follows:

	Principal	Interest Rate
OPWC #CE43O - Velliquette Road and Other Resurfacing	\$ 7,097	0.00%
OPWC #CE46Q - Benton TR 77, Allen TR 7 & 214, Carroll TR 90 & 91	39,257	0.00%
Total	\$ 46,354	

The prior balance of OPWC #CE46Q was understated by \$4,462.

The Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) CE43O loan relates to Velliquette Road and other resurfacing projects. The OPWC CE46Q loan relates to a joint road resurfacing project.

Amortization

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

Year Ending December 31:	OPWC Loans
2022	\$22,754
2023	15,656
2024	7,944
Total	\$46,354

Benton Township
Ottawa County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2021

Note 10 – Contingent Liabilities

Management believes there are no pending claims or lawsuits.

Note 11 – Fund Balances

Encumbrances are commitments related to unperformed contracts for goods or services. Encumbrance accounting is utilized to the extent necessary to assure effective budgetary control and accountability and to facilitate effective cash planning and control. At year end, the balances of these amounts were as follows:

<u>Fund Balances</u>	<u>General</u>	<u>Special Revenue</u>	<u>Total</u>
Outstanding Encumbrances	\$ 15,608	\$ 1,337	\$ 16,945

The fund balance of special revenue funds is either restricted or committed. The fund balance of capital projects funds is restricted, committed, or assigned. These restricted, committed, or assigned amounts in the special revenue and capital projects funds include the outstanding encumbrances. In the general fund, outstanding encumbrances are considered assigned.

Note 12 – COVID-19

The United States and the State of Ohio declared a state of emergency in March of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Ohio's state of emergency ended in June, 2021 while the national state of emergency continues. During 2021, the Township received COVID-19 funding. The financial impact of COVID-19 and the continuing emergency measures will impact subsequent periods of the Township.

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

Benton Township
Ottawa County
1670 North Walker Street
Graytown, Ohio 43432-9800

To the Board of Trustees:

We have audited, in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, the financial statements of the cash balances, receipts, and disbursements for each governmental fund type of Benton Township, Ottawa County, (the Township) as of and for the years ended December 31, 2022 and 2021, and the related notes to the financial statements, and have issued our report thereon dated June 26, 2023, wherein we noted the Township followed financial reporting provisions Ohio Revised Code Section 117.38 and Ohio Administrative Code Section 117-2-03(C) permit. We also noted the financial impact of COVID-19 and the continuing emergency measures which may impact subsequent periods of the Township.

Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered the Township's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purposes of expressing our opinions on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Township's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the Township's internal control.

A *deficiency in internal control* exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct misstatements on a timely basis. A *material weakness* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the Township's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. A *significant deficiency* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. Therefore, unidentified material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist. We did identify a certain deficiency in internal control, described in the accompanying schedule of findings that we consider a material weakness. We consider finding 2022-001 to be a material weakness.


Report on Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Township's financial statements are free from material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the financial statements. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed an instance of noncompliance or other matter that is required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*, which is described in the accompanying Schedule of Findings as item 2022-002.

We also noted certain other matters not requiring inclusion in this report that we reported to the Township's management in a separate letter dated June 26, 2023.

Purpose of This Report

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the Township's internal control or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the Township's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.



Charles E. Harris & Associates, Inc.
June 26, 2023

Benton Township
Ottawa County
Schedule of Findings
December 31, 2022 and 2021

Findings Related to the Financial Statements Required to be Reported in Accordance with GAGAS
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Finding Number: 2022-001 – Material Weakness

Recording of Transactions and Audit Adjustments

During 2022 and 2021, the Township erroneously recorded numerous transactions. The more significant adjustments are as follows:

- In 2022 and 2021, \$8,910 and \$7,822 from other entities' share of a project, were recorded as charges for services and fines and forfeitures respectively, instead of miscellaneous receipts.
- In 2022, insurance disbursement of \$15,000 was recorded as other financing uses instead of general government.
- In 2021, debt payment of \$10,000 was recorded as other financing uses instead of debt service principal.
- In 2022 and 2021, Homestead and Rollbacks of \$44,698 and \$64,098 were recorded as property tax revenue respectively, rather than intergovernmental revenue in both the general and special revenue funds.
- In 2021, public works disbursements of \$33,925 and \$2,000 were recorded as general government and other financing uses respectively, rather than public works disbursements.
- The Township debt footnotes were modified to present accurate principal balances.
- Other changes were necessary to correct various items in the footnotes.

The accompanying financial statements and the Township's records have been adjusted to properly reflect these transactions. Various other immaterial posting errors were also noted and brought to the attention of management.

Failure to report transactions correctly results in the financial statements not being accurately presented. We recommend that the Fiscal Officer refers to the Ohio Township Handbook, the UAN manual, other Auditor of State guidance to properly classify its transactions. In addition, we recommend the Fiscal Officer review all financial reports compiled by UAN to ensure their accuracy, including the budgetary information.

Management's Response:

See Corrective Action Plan.

Finding Number 2022-002 – Noncompliance

Certification of Expenditures

Ohio Rev. Code § 5705.41 (D), requires, in part, that no subdivision or taxing unit shall make any contract or order any expenditure unless there is attached thereto a certificate of the fiscal officer of the subdivision certifying that the amount required to meet the obligation has been lawfully appropriated for such purposes and is in the treasury or in the process of collection to the credit of an appropriate fund free from any previous encumbrance. Every contract made without such a certificate shall be void and no warrant shall be issued in payment of any amount due thereon.

Benton Township
Ottawa County
Schedule of Findings
December 31, 2022 and 2021

Findings Related to the Financial Statements Required to be Reported in Accordance with GAGAS (continued)
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Finding Number 2022-002 – Noncompliance (continued)

There are several exceptions to the standard requirement state above that a fiscal officer’s certificate must be obtained prior to a subdivision or taxing authority entering into a contract or order involving the expenditure of money. The main exceptions are: “then and now” certificates, blanket certificates, and super blanket certificates, which are provided for in sections 5705.41(D)(1) and 5705.41(D)(3), respectively, of the Ohio Revised Code.

1. **“Then and Now” Certificate** – If the fiscal officer can certify that both at the time the contract or order was made (“then”), and at the time that the fiscal officer is completing the certification (“now”), that sufficient funds were available or in the process of collection, to the credit of a proper fund, properly appropriated and free from any previous encumbrance, the Township can authorize the drawing of a warrant for the payment of the amount due. The Township has thirty days from the receipt of the “then and now” certificate to approve payment by resolution.

Amounts of less than \$3,000 may be paid by the fiscal officer without a resolution upon completion of the “then and now” certificate provided that the expenditure is otherwise lawful. This does not eliminate any otherwise applicable requirement for approval of expenditure by the Township.

2. **Blanket Certificate** – Fiscal officers may prepare “blanket” certificates for a certain sum of money not in excess of an amount established by resolution adopted by a majority of the members of the legislative authority against any specific line item account over a period not running beyond the end of the current fiscal year. The blanket certificates may, but need not be limited to a specific vendor. Only one blanket certificate may be outstanding at one particular time for any one particular line item appropriation.
3. **Super Blanket Certificate** – The Township may also make expenditures and contracts for any amount from a specific line-item appropriation account in a specified fund upon certification of the fiscal officer for most professional services, fuel, oil, food items, and any other specific recurring and reasonably predicible operating expense. This certification is not to extend beyond the current year. More than one super blanket certificate may be outstanding at a particular time for any line item appropriation.

The Township did not properly certify the availability of funds for 37% of the transactions tested in 2022 and 33% of the transactions tested in 2021. Failure to certify the availability of funds and encumber appropriations could result in overspending and negative cash balances.

To improve controls over disbursements and to help reduce the possibility of the Township’s fund exceeding budgetary spending limitations, we recommend the Fiscal Officer certify the availability of funds prior to the commitment for the expenditure of Township money. The Township should consider the use of blanket purchase orders and “then and now” certificates to assist in complying with the above requirement.

Management’s Response:

See Corrective Action Plan.

BENTON TOWNSHIP
OTTAWA COUNTY

SCHEDULE OF PRIOR AUDIT FINDINGS
For the Years Ended December 31, 2022 and 2021
Prepared by Management

Finding Number	Finding Summary	Status	Additional Information
2020-001	Material Weakness - Reporting	Not Corrected	

BENTON TOWNSHIP
OTTAWA COUNTY

CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN
For the Years Ended December 31, 2022 and 2021
Prepared by Management

Finding Number	Planned Corrective Action	Anticipated Completion Date	Responsible Contact Person
2022-001	We will continue to work on recording receipts and payments to the proper classifications.	Immediately	Gayle Millinger, Fiscal Officer
2022-002	We will continue to work on properly certifying disbursements in timely manner.	Immediately	Gayle Millinger, Fiscal Officer

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OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE KEITH FABER



BENTON TOWNSHIP

OTTAWA 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 8/31/2023

88 East Broad 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