



OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE
KEITH FABER



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INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT ON APPLYING AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES

Belmont County Tourism Council, Inc.
Belmont County
Ohio Valley Mall Unit 485
St. Clairsville, Ohio 43950

We have performed the procedures enumerated below on the Belmont County Tourism Council, Inc., Belmont County, Ohio (the Council) receipts, disbursements and balances recorded in the cash basis accounting records for the years ended December 31, 2023 and 2022 and certain compliance requirements related to those transactions and balances, included in the information provided to us by the management of the Council. The Council is responsible for the receipts, disbursements and balances recorded in the cash basis accounting records for the years ended December 31, 2023 and 2022 and certain compliance requirements related to these transactions and balances included in the information provided to us by the Council.

The Board of Trustees and the management of the Council have agreed to and acknowledged that the procedures performed are appropriate to meet the intended purpose of providing assistance in the evaluation of the Council's receipts, disbursements and balances recorded in their cash-basis accounting records for the years ended December 31, 2023 and 2022, 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

1. We recalculated the December 31, 2023 and December 31, 2022 bank reconciliations. We found no exceptions.
2. We agreed the January 1, 2022 beginning fund balances for each account recorded in the Council's cash ledgers to the December 31, 2021 balances in the prior year Agreed-Upon Procedures working papers. We found no exceptions. We also agreed the January 1, 2023 beginning fund balances for each account recorded in the Council's cash ledgers to the December 31, 2022 balances in the Council's cash ledgers. We found no exceptions.
3. We agreed the 2023 and 2022 bank reconciliation bank balances as of December 31, 2023 and 2022 to the total fund cash balances reported in the Council's cash ledgers. The amounts agreed.

Cash (Continued)

4. We confirmed the December 31, 2023 bank account balances with the Council's financial institutions. We found no exceptions. We also agreed the confirmed balances to the amounts appearing in the December 31, 2023 bank reconciliation without exception.
5. We selected 5 reconciling debits (such as outstanding checks) from the December 31, 2023 bank reconciliation:
 - a. We traced each debit to the subsequent January bank statements. 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 investments held at December 31, 2023 and December 31, 2022 to determine that they were of a type authorized by the CVB. We found no exceptions.

Cash Receipts

1. We summarized lodging taxes the Belmont County's Cross Reference Report by Vendor reported as payments to the Council during the years ending December 31, 2023 and 2022. The total reported disbursements were as follows:

Year Ended	Amount
December 31, 2023	\$494,531
December 31, 2022	\$514,152

2. We compared the amounts from step 1 to amounts recorded as lodging tax receipts on the Council's cash ledgers. We found no exceptions.

Cash Disbursements

We inquired of management regarding sources describing allowable purposes or restrictions related to the Council's disbursements of lodging taxes. We listed these sources and summarized significant related restrictions below:

Source of Restrictions

- a. The Council's Articles of Incorporation
- b. The Council's 501(c)(6) Tax Exemption
- c. Ohio Rev. Code § 5739.092

The Council's tax exemption prohibits it from disbursements supporting a candidate's election.

Ohio Rev. Code § 5739.092 restricts the Council to spending lodging tax "specifically for promotion, advertising, and marketing of the region in which the county is located."

Auditor of State Bulletin 2003-005 concludes that disbursement of public funds (e.g. lodging taxes) for alcohol are generally improper. However, Auditor of State Bulletin 2014-003 explains when sales of alcohol at public events are permissible.

Cash Disbursements (Continued)

We selected 10 disbursements of lodging taxes from the Council's manual monthly check register for the year ended December 31, 2023 and 10 disbursements from 2022 and compared the purpose for these disbursements as documented on vendor invoices or other supporting documentation to the sources of restrictions listed in *Cash Disbursements Step 1* above. We found no instances where the purpose described on the invoice or other supporting documentation described a violation the restrictions listed above.

We were engaged by the Council 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 of the Council's lodging tax receipts and disbursements for the years ended December 31, 2023 and 2022, the objective of which would have been to opine on lodging tax receipts and disbursements or provide a conclusion. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion or conclusion. Had we performed additional procedures, other matters might have come to our attention that we would have reported to you.

We are required to be independent of the Council 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
Auditor of State
Columbus, Ohio

September 11, 2024

OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE KEITH FABER



BELMONT COUNTY TOURISM COUNCIL, INC.

BELMONT 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 9/26/2024

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This report is a matter of public record and is available online at
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