

SALT CREEK TOWNSHIP

MUSKINGUM COUNTY, OHIO

REGULAR AUDIT

FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023



OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE KEITH FABER



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Columbus, Ohio 43215
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Board of Trustees
Salt Creek Township
7650 Chandlersville Road
Chandlersville, OH 43727

We have reviewed the *Independent Auditor's Report* of Salt Creek Township, Muskingum County, prepared by Charles E. Harris & Associates, Inc., for the audit period January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2024. 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. Salt Creek Township is responsible for compliance with these laws and regulations.

KEITH FABER
Ohio Auditor of State

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

July 14, 2025

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**SALT CREEK TOWNSHIP
MUSKINGUM COUNTY**

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Salt Creek Township
Muskingum County
7650 Chandlersville Road
Chandlersville, OH 43727

To the Board of Trustees:

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Unmodified and Adverse Opinions

We have audited the financial statements of Salt Creek Township, Muskingum 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, 2024 and 2023, 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, 2024 and 2023, 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, 2024 and 2023, 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 the 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.

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.

Salt Creek Township
Muskingum County
Independent Auditor's Report
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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 April 30, 2025, 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.

Charles E. Harris & Associates, Inc.
April 30, 2025

**SALT CREEK TOWNSHIP
MUSKINGUM COUNTY**

**COMBINED STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS
AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES (REGULATORY CASH BASIS)
ALL GOVERNMENTAL FUND TYPES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024**

	General	Special Revenue	Totals (Memorandum Only)
Cash Receipts			
Property and Other Local Taxes	\$ 87,633	\$ 80,253	\$ 167,886
Licenses, Permits and Fees	-	4,500	4,500
Intergovernmental	24,265	172,195	196,460
Earnings On Investments	259	487	746
Miscellaneous	<u>30</u>	<u>3,000</u>	<u>3,030</u>
<i>Total Cash Receipts</i>	<u>112,187</u>	<u>260,435</u>	<u>372,622</u>
Cash Disbursements			
Current:			
General Government	72,239	900	73,139
Public Safety	-	33,715	33,715
Public Works	3,362	205,051	208,413
Health	2,015	4,802	6,817
Capital Outlay	4,544	-	4,544
Debt Service:			
Principal Retirement	10,038	-	10,038
Interest and Fiscal Charges	<u>851</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>851</u>
<i>Total Cash Disbursements</i>	<u>93,049</u>	<u>244,468</u>	<u>337,517</u>
<i>Net Change in Fund Cash Balances</i>	<u>19,138</u>	<u>15,967</u>	<u>35,105</u>
<i>Fund Cash Balances, January 1 Restated</i>	<u>63,121</u>	<u>349,197</u>	<u>412,318</u>
Fund Cash Balances, December 31	<u>\$ 82,259</u>	<u>\$ 365,164</u>	<u>\$ 447,423</u>

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

Salt Creek Township
Muskingum County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2024

Note 1 – Reporting Entity

The constitution and laws of the State of Ohio establish the rights and privileges of Salt Creek Township, Muskingum County, (the Township) as a body corporate and politic. A publicly elected three-member Board of Trustees directs the Township. The Township provides general government services, road and bridge maintenance, and cemetery maintenance. The Township contracts with Wayne Township Volunteer Fire Department to provide fire services. While there is no contract for Emergency Medical Services in Salt Creek Township, the Muskingum County Sheriff's Office dispatches emergency personnel from a paid service when needed. The Township appropriates Special Levy Fund money to support a volunteer fire department.

Public Entity Risk Pool

The Township participates in a public entity risk pool. Note 6 to the financial statements provides additional information for this entity.

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 changes in fund balances (regulatory cash basis) for all governmental fund types which is organized on a fund type basis.

Fund Accounting

The Township uses funds 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 Fund:

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

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 Township 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).

Salt Creek Township
Muskingum County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2024

Note 2 – Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

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. Appropriations lapse at year end.

Estimated Resources Estimated resources include estimates of cash to be received (budgeted receipts) plus 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 are canceled and reappropriated in the subsequent year.

A summary of 2024 budgetary activity appears in Note 3.

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.

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

Township employees earn sick and vacation time that can be used for time off. In certain circumstances, such as upon leaving employment or retirement, employees are entitled to cash payments for unused leave. The financial statements do not include a liability for unpaid leave.

SBITAs

The Township has entered into a noncancelable Subscription-Based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) contract (as defined by GASB 96) for one type of software which is a contract related to financial systems. Subscription disbursements are recognized when they are paid.

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:

Salt Creek Township
Muskingum County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2024

Note 2 – Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

Fund Balance (Continued)

Nonspendable The Township classifies assets as *nonspendable* when legally or contractually required to maintain the amounts intact.

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 the 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 related to fund balance is included in Note 10.

Note 3 – Budgetary Activity

Budgetary activity for the year ending December 31, 2024 follows:

Fund Type	2024 Budgeted vs. Actual Receipts		
	Budgeted Receipts	Actual Receipts	Variance
General	\$ 68,543	\$ 112,187	\$ 43,644
Special Revenue	58,043	260,435	202,392

Fund Type	2024 Budgeted vs. Actual Budgetary Basis Disbursements		
	Appropriation Authority	Budgetary Disbursements	Variance
General	\$ 123,500	\$ 93,049	\$ 30,451
Special Revenue	326,839	244,468	82,371

Contrary to Ohio Revised Code 5705.41(D), the Township did not properly certify the availability of funds in 20% of transactions tested.

Salt Creek Township
Muskingum County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2024

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 and investments. A summary of the Township's deposit account is as follows:

<u>2024</u>	
<i>Cash Management Pool:</i>	
Demand deposits	\$ 447,423

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, 2024, the Township is holding no unremitted employee payroll withholdings.

Deposits

Deposits are either insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation 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.

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.

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

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

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

Salt Creek Township
Muskingum County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2024

Note 6 – Risk Management (Continued)

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

2023	
Cash and investments	\$33,494,457
Actuarial liabilities	\$10,885,549

Note 7 – Defined Benefit Pension Plan

Ohio Public Employees Retirement System

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

The Ohio Revised Code also prescribes contribution rates. OPERS members contributed 10 percent of their gross salaries, and the Township contributed an amount equaling 14 percent of participants' gross salaries. The Township has paid all contributions required through December 31, 2024.

Note 8 – Postemployment Benefits

OPERS offers cost-sharing, multiple-employer defined benefit postemployment plans. OPERS offers a health reimbursement agreement (HRA) allowance to benefit receipts meeting certain age and service credit requirements. The HRA is an account funded by OPERS that provides tax-free reimbursement for qualified medical expenses such as monthly post-tax insurance premiums, deductibles, co-insurance, and co-pays incurred by eligible benefit recipients and their dependents. For calendar year 2024, the portion of OPERS employer contributions allocated to health care was 0 percent for members in the traditional pension plan and 2 percent for members in the combined plan. For 2024, the portion of employer contributions OPERS allocated to health care for members in the member-directed plan was 4.0 percent; however, a portion of the health care rate was funded with reserves.

Note 9 – Debt

Debt outstanding at December 31, 2024, was as follows:

	Principal	Interest Rate
2021 Ram 5500	\$ 20,911	2.750%

The Township entered into a loan agreement with Citizens National Bank for the amount of \$50,225 at an interest rate of 2.750% in 2021 to finance the purchase of a new 2021 Ram 5500 truck. The maturity date is November 2026.

Salt Creek Township
Muskingum County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2024

Note 9 – Debt (Continued)

Amortization

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

Year Ending December 31:	Township Equipment
2025	\$ 10,889
2026	10,889
Total	<u><u>\$ 21,778</u></u>

Note 10 – 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. There were no outstanding encumbrances at year end.

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

Note 11 – Restatement of Fund Cash Balance

The Township increased their beginning fund cash position at January 1, 2024 in the General fund due to \$728 in voided checks from prior years. The effect of the adjustment on beginning fund cash balance is reflected in the chart below.

Governmental Funds	12/31/2023		1/1/2024	
	As Previously Reported	Voided Checks	As Restated	
General Fund	\$ 62,393	\$ 728	\$ 63,121	

**SALT CREEK TOWNSHIP
MUSKINGUM COUNTY**

**COMBINED STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS
AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES (REGULATORY CASH BASIS)
ALL GOVERNMENTAL FUND TYPES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023**

	General	Special Revenue	Totals (Memorandum Only)
Cash Receipts			
Property and Other Local Taxes	\$ 63,033	\$ 52,043	\$ 115,076
Licenses, Permits and Fees	-	3,450	3,450
Intergovernmental	24,662	172,908	197,570
Earnings On Investments	397	401	798
Miscellaneous	367	1,800	2,167
<i>Total Cash Receipts</i>	<i>88,459</i>	<i>230,602</i>	<i>319,061</i>
Cash Disbursements			
Current:			
General Government	72,383	1,408	73,791
Public Safety	-	21,921	21,921
Public Works	3,819	207,616	211,435
Health	1,260	7,212	8,472
Capital Outlay	50,031	2,408	52,439
Debt Service:			
Principal Retirement	9,769	-	9,769
Interest and Fiscal Charges	1,120	-	1,120
<i>Total Cash Disbursements</i>	<i>138,382</i>	<i>240,565</i>	<i>378,947</i>
<i>Net Change in Fund Cash Balances</i>	<i>(49,923)</i>	<i>(9,963)</i>	<i>(59,886)</i>
<i>Fund Cash Balances, January 1 Restated</i>	<i>112,316</i>	<i>359,160</i>	<i>471,476</i>
Fund Cash Balances, December 31	\$ 62,393	\$ 349,197	\$ 411,590

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

Salt Creek Township
Muskingum County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

Note 1 – Reporting Entity

The constitution and laws of the State of Ohio establish the rights and privileges of Salt Creek Township, Muskingum County, (the Township) as a body corporate and politic. A publicly elected three-member Board of Trustees directs the Township. The Township provides general government services, road and bridge maintenance, and cemetery maintenance. The Township contracts with Wayne Township Volunteer Fire Department to provide fire services. While there is no contract for Emergency Medical Services in Salt Creek Township, the Muskingum County Sheriff's Office dispatches emergency personnel from a paid service when needed. The Township appropriates Special Levy Fund money to support a volunteer fire department.

Public Entity Risk Pool

The Township participates in a public entity risk pool. Note 6 to the financial statements provides additional information for this entity.

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 changes in fund balances (regulatory cash basis) for all governmental fund types which is organized on a fund type basis.

Fund Accounting

The Township uses funds 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 Fund:

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

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 Township 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).

Salt Creek Township
Muskingum County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

Note 2 – Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

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. Appropriations lapse at year end.

Estimated Resources Estimated resources include estimates of cash to be received (budgeted receipts) plus 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 are canceled and reappropriated in the subsequent year.

A summary of 2023 budgetary activity appears in Note 3.

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.

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.

SBITAs

The Township has entered into a noncancelable Subscription-Based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) contract (as defined by GASB 96) for one type of software which is a contract related to financial systems. Subscription disbursements are recognized when they are paid.

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.

Salt Creek Township
Muskingum County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

Note 2 – Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

Fund Balance (Continued)

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 the 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 related to fund balance is included in Note 10.

Note 3 – Budgetary Activity

Budgetary activity for the year ending December 31, 2023 follows:

2023 Budgeted vs. Actual Receipts			
Fund Type	Budgeted	Actual	Variance
	Receipts	Receipts	
General	\$ 68,351	\$ 88,459	\$ 20,108
Special Revenue	57,893	230,602	172,709

2023 Budgeted vs. Actual Budgetary Basis Disbursements			
Fund Type	Budgeted	Actual	Variance
	Appropriation	Disbursements	
General	\$ 180,667	\$ 138,382	\$ 42,285
Special Revenue	416,085	240,565	175,520

Contrary to Ohio Revised Code 5705.41(D), the Township did not properly certify the availability of funds in 39% of transactions tested.

Salt Creek Township
Muskingum County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

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 and investments. A summary of the Township's deposit account is as follows:

<u>2023</u>	
Cash Management Pool:	
Demand deposits	\$ 411,590

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, 2023, the Township is holding no unremitted employee payroll withholdings.

Deposits

Deposits are either insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation 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.

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.

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

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

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

Salt Creek Township
Muskingum County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

Note 6 – Risk Management (Continued)

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

2023	
Cash and investments	\$33,494,457
Actuarial liabilities	\$10,885,549

Note 7 – Defined Benefit Pension Plan

Ohio Public Employees Retirement System

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

The Ohio Revised Code also prescribes contribution rates. OPERS members contributed 10 percent of their gross salaries, and the Township contributed an amount equaling 14 percent of participants' gross salaries. The Township has paid all contributions required through December 31, 2023.

Note 8 – Postemployment Benefits

OPERS offers cost-sharing, multiple-employer defined benefit postemployment plans. OPERS offers a health reimbursement agreement (HRA) allowance to benefit receipts meeting certain age and service credit requirements. The HRA is an account funded by OPERS that provides tax-free reimbursement for qualified medical expenses such as monthly post-tax insurance premiums, deductibles, co-insurance, and co-pays incurred by eligible benefit recipients and their dependents. For calendar year 2023, the portion of OPERS employer contributions allocated to health care was 0 percent for members in the traditional pension plan and 2 percent for members in the combined plan. For 2023, the portion of employer contributions OPERS allocated to health care for members in the member-directed plan was 4.0 percent; however, a portion of the health care rate was funded with reserves.

Note 9 – Debt

Debt outstanding at December 31, 2023, was as follows:

	Principal	Interest Rate
2021 Ram 5500	\$ 30,949	2.750%

The Township entered into a loan agreement with Citizens National Bank for the amount of \$50,225 at an interest rate of 2.750% in 2021 to finance the purchase of a new 2021 Ram 5500 truck. The maturity date is November 2026.

Salt Creek Township
Muskingum County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

Note 9 – Debt (Continued)

Amortization

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

Year Ending December 31:	Township Equipment
2024	\$ 10,889
2025	10,889
2026	10,889
Total	<u><u>\$ 32,667</u></u>

Note 10 – 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. There were no outstanding encumbrances at year end.

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

Note 11 – Restatement of Fund Cash Balance

The Township increased their beginning fund cash position at January 1, 2024 in the Gasoline fund due to \$968 in voided checks from prior years and increased the Road and Bridge fund by \$32,500 from the General fund due to audit adjustments. The effect of the adjustments on beginning fund cash balance is reflected in the chart below.

	12/31/2023				
	As Previously Reported	21-20 Audit Adjustments	Voided Checks	1/1/2024 As Restated	
Governmental Funds					
General Fund	\$ 144,816	\$ (32,500)	\$ -	\$ 112,316	
Special Revenue Funds	325,692	32,500	968	359,160	

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

Salt Creek Township
Muskingum County
7650 Chandlersville Road
Chandlersville, OH 43727

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 Salt Creek Township, Muskingum County, Ohio (the Township) as of and for the years ended December 31, 2024 and 2023, and the related notes to the financial statements, and have issued our report thereon dated April 30, 2025, 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.

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 purpose 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 and therefore, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that were not identified. We identified a certain deficiency in internal control, described in the accompanying Schedule of Findings as item 2024-001 that we consider to be a material weakness.

*Salt Creek Township
Muskingum County*
Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control Over
Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters
Required by *Government Auditing Standards*
Page 2

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 2024-002.

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 April 30, 2025.

Township's Responses to Findings

Government Auditing Standards requires the auditor to perform limited procedures on the Township's responses to the findings identified in our audit and described in the accompanying Corrective Action Plan. The Township's responses were not subject to the other auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and accordingly, we express no opinion on the responses.

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

Charles E. Harris & Associates, Inc.

April 30, 2025

SALT CREEK TOWNSHIP
MUSKINGUM COUNTY

SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023

FINDINGS RELATED TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
REQUIRED TO BE REPORTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GAGAS

FINDING 2024-001 - Material Weakness

Financial Reporting - Posting Receipts and Disbursements

The Township should have procedures and controls in place to prevent and detect errors in financial reporting. During 2024 and 2023 receipts and disbursements were not always posted or classified correctly. The following posting errors were noted:

For 2024

- Reclassification to properly record property tax receipts from Intergovernmental to Property and Other Local Taxes in the General Fund \$37,882, Road and Bridge Fund \$18,945, and Special Levy Fund \$11,489.
- Reclassification to properly record property tax rollback receipts from Property and Other Local Taxes to Intergovernmental in the General Fund \$3,325, Road and Bridge Fund \$1,663, and Special Levy Fund \$742.
- Reclassification to properly present debt payments in the General Fund from Capital Outlay \$10,889 to Principal \$10,038 and Interest and Other Fiscal Charges \$851.

For 2023

- Reclassification to properly record property tax receipts from Intergovernmental to Property and Other Local Taxes in the General Fund \$30,971, Road and Bridge Fund \$15,489, and Special Levy Fund \$8,500.
- Reclassification to properly record property tax rollback receipts from Property and Other Local Taxes to Intergovernmental in the General Fund \$6,577, Road and Bridge Fund \$3,288, and Special Levy Fund \$1,469.
- Reclassification to properly present debt payments in the General Fund from Capital Outlay \$10,889 to Principal Retirement \$9,769 and Interest and Fiscal Charges \$1,120.
- Adjustment to properly record Road and Bridge intergovernmental grant from the General Fund to the Road and Bridge Fund for \$15,000.

Not posting receipts and disbursements correctly resulted in the financial statements requiring reclassification and adjusting entries. The financial statements reflect all adjustments and reclassifications. The Township has made the adjustments to their accounting system.

We recommend the Fiscal Officer refer to the Ohio Township Handbook, Uniform Accounting Network (UAN) Manual and other Auditor of State guidance to determine the proper establishment of receipt and disbursement accounts and proper posting.

Management's Response – See Corrective Action Plan.

FINDING 2024-002 - Noncompliance

Certifying the Availability of Funds

Ohio Revised Code Section 5705.41(D) requires that no subdivision or taxing unit shall make any contract or give any order involving the expenditure of money unless a certificate signed by the fiscal officer is attached thereto. The fiscal officer must certify that the amount required meeting any such contract or expenditure has been lawfully appropriated and is in the treasury, or is in the process of collection to the credit of an appropriate fund free from any previous encumbrance. Only the subdivision's fiscal officer need sign the certificate. Every contract made without such a certificate shall be void, and no warrant shall be issued in payment of any amount due thereon.

**SALT CREEK TOWNSHIP
MUSKINGUM COUNTY**

**SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023**

**FINDINGS RELATED TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
REQUIRED TO BE REPORTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GAGAS (Continued)**

FINDING 2024-002 – Noncompliance (Continued)

Certifying the Availability of Funds (Continued)

There are several exceptions to the standard requirement stated 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 that 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 taxing authority can authorize the drawing of a warrant for the payment of the amount due. The taxing authority 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 expenditures by the taxing authority.

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 predictable operating expense. This certification is not to extend beyond the current year. Only one super blanket certificate may be outstanding at a particular time for any one line-item appropriation.

The Township did not properly certify the availability of funds prior to purchase commitment for 20% and 39% of the expenditures tested for 2024 and 2023, respectively.

Unless the exceptions noted above are used, prior certification is not only required by statute but is a key control in the disbursement process to assure that purchase commitments receive prior approval. To improve controls over disbursements and to help reduce the possibility of the Township's funds exceeding budgetary spending limitations, we recommend that the Fiscal Officer certify that the funds are or will be available prior to an obligation being incurred by the Township. When prior certification is not possible, "then and now" certification should be used.

Management's Response – See Corrective Action Plan.

**SALT CREEK TOWNSHIP
MUSKINGUM COUNTY**

**CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN - PREPARED BY MANAGEMENT
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024 AND 2023**

Finding Number	Planned Corrective Action	Anticipated Completion Date	Responsible Contact Person
2024-001	Fiscal Officer will follow the guidance obtained during the current audit to process transactions.	Immediately	Greg Hamill – Fiscal Officer
2024-02	The Fiscal Officer will follow the guidelines outlined in the Ohio Compliance Supplement concerning certification of funds.	Immediately	Greg Hamill – Fiscal Officer

OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE KEITH FABER



SALT CREEK 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 7/24/2025

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