



# JOSH MANDEL

## STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

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By Dean Wright  
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GALLIPOLIS &mdash; Gallipolis and Gallipolis Township joined a state transparency initiative Tuesday called Ohio Checkbook in order to display government financial information to the public.

Dan Risko, deputy director of public affairs for Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel's office, on Tuesday exhibited the features of the website Ohiocheckbook.com to Gallipolis City Commission and Gallipolis Township officials in the Gallipolis Municipal Building. Commission president Tony Gallagher praised the effort, calling it "amazing" in regard to how far technology had come and how the initiative would benefit the public with financial questions.

Commissioner Stephen Wallis said he believed it imperative for the city to take part in the Ohio Checkbook project, especially with questions regarding the city's ongoing budget woes.

In December 2014, Mandel launched Ohiocheckbook.com, which set a new national standard for government transparency and, for the first time in Ohio history, put all state spending information on the internet. The website has earned Ohio the No. 1 government transparency ranking in the country for the second year in a row, according to information provided by the treasurer's office.

Rio Grande and Centerville have already joined the checkbook initiative and this will make Gallipolis and Gallipolis Township the third and fourth entities in the county to do so.

The website allows citizens to view city employee salary information as well as departmental budget spending and individual checks cut for various expenses. According to City Clerk and Auditor Annette Landers, the website will be updated annually. Previous year's information will also be available on the website for the public to access.

"I believe the people of Gallia County have a right to know how their tax money is being spent and I applaud local leaders here for partnering with my office to post the finances on Ohiocheckbook.com," Mandel said. "By posting local government spending online, we are empowering taxpayers across Ohio to hold public officials accountable."

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