



JOSH MANDEL

STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

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By Jennifer Bahney
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CIRCLEVILLE — Pickaway County's finances are now live on the Ohio Treasurer's transparency web site, OhioCheckbook.com. A liaison from the Treasurer's office, Jamie Barker, made the announcement at Tuesday night's meeting of the Pickaway County Township Association.

"To bring a county online is kind of a big deal," Barker said. "Pickaway County is now our 23rd county in the state to actually have a published checkbook. There are a lot of moving parts within a county government, so to be able to get everybody onto the same page and get all the information we need to build the site, it's a really big deal."

Pickaway County expressed interest in joining the financial transparency program in April 2015.

"Pickaway County was the first county in the state to adopt a resolution saying we wanted to be a part of this," said Commissioner Brian Stewart. "But technology intervened, and we had to get our technology to talk to the system."

With software issues ironed out, the Treasurer's Office was able to work with County Auditor Melissa Betz to upload the county's data for Fiscal Year 2015.

"We will be adding some more years to it," Betz said. "We were trying just to get going with this and wanted to make sure departments were comfortable with it, so hopefully in the near future, you'll see some updates."

Barker said that Pickaway County now has a total of \$96.5 million in spending available online for anyone to access.

"There are over 21,700 individual expenditures from the county, and you can look at every single one of those transactions and see the information," Barker said.

All information displayed on OhioCheckbook.com is a matter of public record and Barker said that no personal information is compromised on the site.

"There are no account numbers or anything listed like that on here as they're listed on your personal check," Barker said. "We take your security very seriously."

Local officials present for the announcement expressed their support for the program.

"We believe the residents of Pickaway County deserve to have easy access to this information," said Commissioner Harold Henson. He praised the Treasurer's office for making the service available at no cost to Pickaway County taxpayers.



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State Representative Gary Scherer said he is an advocate for transparent government.

"I encourage all government entities in our region to follow suit if they haven't already done so," he said.

Other Pickaway County entities who have made their finances available on the website include the City of Circleville, Village of Ashville, and Harrison Township.

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