



# JOSH MANDEL

## STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

ThisWeek Community News  
By Marla K. Kuhlman  
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Welcome to the village of Johnstown's checkbook.

Taxpayers can now view online how the village has spent its money from 2010 to 2015 at [Johnstown.OhioCheckbook.com](http://Johnstown.OhioCheckbook.com).

Johnstown Finance Director Dana Steffan said Johnstown's checkbook for that time frame is available "for anyone in the world to view."

Johnstown's checkbook became available online last month, she said.

"It was initiated through state Treasurer (Josh Mandel's) office, who wanted more transparency to public books," Steffan said.

"I provided downloads from our system for expenditures. It's in a nice format. You can go to any department in the village. There's five years of expenditure history."

Village Manager/Planner Jim Lenner said Mandel has pushed the initiative hard.

"It's neat and very intuitive," he said.

"I believe the people of Ohio have a right to know how their tax money is being spent," Mandel said about [OhioCheckbook.com](http://OhioCheckbook.com).

"By posting local government spending online, we are empowering taxpayers across Ohio to hold public officials accountable."

The web link for Johnstown lists total transactions by fiscal year and total spending by fiscal year for areas including traffic signs and signals, recreation, street cleaning, snow and ice, zoning, legislative activities, income tax office, administration building, street lighting department, finance office, economic development, administration office, mayor's court, transfers, street maintenance and repairs, water operating, sewer operating, capital outlay, police department and debt service.

On April 7, 2015, Mandel sent a letter to 18,062 local government and school officials representing 3,962 local entities throughout the state calling on them to place their checkbook level data on [OhioCheckbook.com](http://OhioCheckbook.com) and extending an invitation to partner with his office at no cost to local governments.

Since Mandel's invitation, 442 local governments and school districts throughout Ohio have committed to partnering with [OhioCheckbook.com](http://OhioCheckbook.com), including entities in Licking County, said Mandi Merritt, Mandel's press secretary.



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In addition to the village of Johnstown, other Licking County participants include the city of Pataskala, the village of Hebron, the Southwest Licking School District and the Granville Village School District.

Since the launch of OhioCheckbook.com, there have been more than 426,000 searches, Merritt said.

Ohio was featured in a "Following the Money 2015" report last March after climbing from 46th to 1st in spending transparency as a result of Mandel's release of OhioCheckbook.com.

Because of the launch of the web site, the state received a perfect score of 100 points last year.

It reportedly marked the highest score in the history of the U.S. Public Interest Research Group transparency rankings.

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