



# JOSH MANDEL

## STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

Medina Gazette  
By Bob Finnan  
May 20, 2016

Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel is encouraging all government entities in the state to join his Ohiocheckbook.com program.

The latest in Medina County to join were the villages of Spencer and Westfield Center, Black River school district and Chatham Township.

They were on hand Thursday at a media gathering at the Spencer Municipal Building, 109 N. Main St.

"It gives the taxpayer the freedom to see what's in the books and make sure there is nothing to hide," said Dan Risko, deputy director of public affairs for the treasurer's office and a 2006 Cloverleaf High School graduate.

"It's empowering taxpayers to hold each other accountable. It will help us make better decisions and hopefully, get more efficient government out of it."

Sheri Ramey, Spencer's fiscal officer, said transparency is very important.

"I would focus on the ones who don't want to join," she said. "We believe in transparency, and the public has a right to know where their tax dollars are going."

For the second consecutive year, Ohio has been ranked No. 1 in the nation in transparency by the U.S. Public Interest Research Group, a nonprofit, grassroots organization whose model was proposed by Ralph Nader.

Risko said this program is something in which Mandel believes.

"I believe the people of Medina 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 in a statement Thursday. "By posting local government spending online, we are empowering taxpayers across Ohio to hold public officials accountable."

Black River has joined Medina Schools as the second school district in Medina County to join. Risko indicated that Brunswick and Buckeye schools, along with Medina Township's government, appear close to joining the program.

Chatham is the third township in the county to join, along with Hinckley and Lafayette. Spencer and Westfield are the first villages to join.

Since December 2014, 690 entities including governments, schools, libraries, and soil and water districts, have signed up for



# JOSH MANDEL

## STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

Ohiocheckbook.com. Risko said there are 3,962 total entities in the state. The program started in December 2014.

"The movement has really taken off," Risko said.

"Right now, we're displaying over a half a billion dollars in spending, everything from 2 bucks for a pack of pencils to over \$2 million in road contracts &mdash; and everything in between."

Spencer's online checkbook includes more than 9,200 individual transactions that represent more than \$3.1 million of total spending over the past three years.

Westfield Center's online checkbook includes more than 2,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$2.7 million of total spending over the past two years.

Chatham Township's online checkbook includes more than 1,900 individual transactions that represent more than \$590,000 of total spending over fiscal year 2015.

Black River Schools' online checkbook includes more than 44,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$28.8 million of total spending over the past two fiscal years.

####