



# JOSH MANDEL

## STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

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By Sandi Latimer  
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Four more political subdivisions in Madison County are posting their expenditures online at [www.ohiocheckbook.com](http://www.ohiocheckbook.com), and three others have indicated they will, too.

The village of West Jefferson and Somerford, Monroe and Paint townships went live May 18 with their own pages on the Ohio Treasurer's online checkbook.

"Individuals now have access to where their money is going," said Dan Risko, deputy director of public affairs in the office of Treasurer Josh Mandel. "Whether it's two dollars for pens and pencils or millions of dollars in road projects, residents can track where their money is going."

The village and three townships join Plain City as political subdivisions in Madison County who are part of the transparency effort that has propelled Ohio from near the bottom of the chart two years ago to the top for the past two years. Canaan, Pleasant and Stokes townships have committed to have their expenditures posted online, as well, Risko said.

Since [www.ohiocheckbook.com](http://www.ohiocheckbook.com) was introduced in December 2014, more than half a million searches have been recorded, Risko said.

West Jefferson's online checkbook includes more than 19,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$22 million of spending over the past four years.

Somerford Township's page includes more than 2,000 individual transactions, representing more than \$1.9 million in spending over the past three years.

Monroe Township's page includes more than 1,400 individual transactions, representing more than \$569,000 in spending over the past three years.

Paint Township's online checkbook includes more than 700 individual transactions, representing more than \$460,000 of spending over the past tree years.

Pam Hochadel, fiscal officer for Somerford Township, took part in a [ohiocheckbook.com](http://ohiocheckbook.com) demonstration in the West Jefferson council chambers on May 18.

"I was in favor of this from the outset," she said, but noted some reluctance of other leaders in the township. "We're a rural township and technology things don't always make sense. I see nothing but good coming out of this."



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After the state's expenditures were put online, Mandel invited political subdivisions and other entities to join the effort. Invitations went out April 7, 2015, to nearly 4,000 local governments in Ohio asking them to place their expenditures online.

Hundreds have accepted that invitation and the list grows by the day.

Each political subdivision has its own page:

&ndash; [WestJefferson.OhioCheckbook.com/transparency#](http://WestJefferson.OhioCheckbook.com/transparency#)

&ndash; [SomerfordTownshipMadison.OhioCheckbook.com/transparency#](http://SomerfordTownshipMadison.OhioCheckbook.com/transparency#)

&ndash; [MonroeTownshipMadison.Ohiocheckbook.com/transparency#](http://MonroeTownshipMadison.Ohiocheckbook.com/transparency#)

&ndash; [PaintTownshipMadison.Ohiocheckbook.com/transparency#](http://PaintTownshipMadison.Ohiocheckbook.com/transparency#)

The page features are:

- “Google-style” context search capabilities to allow users to sort by keyword, department, category or vendor;
- functionality to compare state spending year over year or among agencies;
- capability to share charts or checks with social media networks and direct contact for agency fiscal officers.

Just months after ohiocheckbook.com went active, the U.S. Public Interest Research Group in its annual “Following the Money 2015” report listed Ohio as having the top transparency ranking in the country, up from 46th the year before.

For 2016, Ohio received a perfect score of 100 points, the highest score in the history of U.S. PIRG transparency ratings.

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