



JOSH MANDEL

STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

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By Andy Ouriel
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PERKINS TWP. — Anyone can now track each cent spent to find out where millions of dollars in Perkins Township went.

In partnership with the state treasurer's office, township officials on Thursday unveiled an online financial record keeping system showcasing recent monetary transactions.

The website, OhioCheckbook.com, spotlights specifics on township-based tax dollars — such as a purchase's purpose, exact amount and time frame — dating back to 2012.

Perkins Township's online checkbook includes more than 38,000 individual transactions representing about \$23 million of total spending. Going forward township officials should periodically upload new financial information, when it becomes available, to the state website.

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State treasurer Josh Mandel, overseeing the initiative, characterized this website as a way to create government transparency on a digital platform.

"I believe the people of Erie County have a right to know how their tax money is being spent," Mandel said in a statement. "By posting local government spending online, we are empowering taxpayers across Ohio to hold public officials accountable."

Perkins Township joins about 720 local governments and school districts statewide providing informing to the website.

"Perkins Township is proud to be the first township in Erie County to join OhioCheckbook.com," according to a joint statement from township trustees Tim Coleman, Jeff Ferrell and Jim Lang. "Our township officials are committed to transparency, and this website is a great tool for citizens to see how their tax dollars are used to make the community great."

Checking out OhioCheckbook.com

The website, overseen by Ohio treasurer Josh Mandel, aims to create government transparency by placing publicly funded transactions on the Internet.

Launched on Dec. 2, 2014, it marked the first time in Ohio history when citizens could actually see every expenditure made in state government.

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The website displays more than \$529 billion in spending over the last eight years, including more than 146 million transactions. The website includes cutting-edge features, such as:

- Google-style search capabilities, allowing users to sort by keyword, department, category or vendor
- Fully dynamic interactive charts to drill down on state spending
- Functionality to compare state spending year-over-year or among agencies
- The capability to share charts or checks with social media network and direct contact for agency fiscal offices

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