



JOSH MANDEL

STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

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By Rick Palsgrove
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If you are interested in how the city of Groveport spends its money, that information is now accessible to be viewed online.

On Sept. 12, Groveport became the ninth city in Franklin County to begin publicly posting its expenditures on OhioCheckbook.com. To see the city of Groveport's spending, citizens may go to OhioCheckbook.com and visit the local government option or go to Groveport.OhioCheckbook.com.

"This provides more financial transparency for the taxpayers," said Groveport Finance Director Jeff Green. "The information is updated every month."

Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel launched OhioCheckbook.com in 2014. The move put all state spending information online for public viewing.

According to Dan Risko, deputy director of public affairs for the state treasurer's office, Ohio was ranked 46th out of 50 states in government financial transparency a few years ago by the U. S. Public Interest Research Group. However, since OhioCheckbook.com went online, Ohio now ranks first in financial transparency. The program has expanded so counties, cities, villages, school districts, and townships may also post their expenditures for public viewing at no cost to the local government.

Risko said thus far about 20 percent of local governments in Ohio are using OhioCheckbook.com, which allows citizens to review government spending at the checkbook level.

"Just a few clicks on the website allows you to see detailed spending information," said Risko. "You can see fund descriptions, specific spending amounts, and who the city wrote checks to. It even shows you the actual checks that are issued."

OhioCheckbook.com offers "Google-style" contextual search abilities that allow users to sort by keyword, department, category, or vendor. It also has interactive charts that allow users to seek more detailed information.

Green said OhioCheckbook.com makes it easier for citizens to quickly find financial information that in the past they would have had to make formal public records requests to obtain.

"In the past we received many public records requests for financial information," said Green. "Now people can directly refer to the OhioCheckbook.com website and find the information they want."

Added Groveport City Councilman Ed Dildine, "This is a great tool."



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According to the state treasurer's office, Groveport's online OhioCheckbook.com checkbook includes more than 29,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$66 million of total spending over the past three years.

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