



JOSH MANDEL

STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

North Star signs onto OhioCheckbook.com
Greenville Daily Advocate
By Erik Martin
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NORTH STAR — On Wednesday, the village of North Star became the first municipality in Darke County to post its online financials on OhioCheckbook.com.

By doing so, North Star also becomes the third entity in Darke County to sign on, joining the Greenville and Franklin-Monroe school districts in placing its expenditures online for public viewing.

The OhioCheckbook.com website, maintained by the Ohio Treasurer's Office, was launched on Dec. 2, 2014. It allows citizens to see every expenditure in state government dating back to 2008.

The initiative is provided free to local government entities which choose to participate.

In a press release, Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel remarked, "I believe the people of Darke 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. By posting local government spending online, we are empowering taxpayers across Ohio to hold public officials accountable."

North Star Fiscal Officer Carolyn Wilker, Mayor Travis Wilker and former Mayor Cory Griesdorn were joined in the North Star Community Center by Mandel's Deputy Chief of Staff Eric Ochmanek in making the announcement.

Ochmanek said, "Today, on the state level, we have nearly a half trillion dollars of state government spending, everything from a \$2 pack of pencils to millions of dollars in road construction projects. For the first time in Ohio history, people can pull up [the information] on their smartphones, laptops and computers and see exactly how their hard-earned money is being spent."

Mayor Wilker, who first took office this month, said, "This looks very good. I like the transparency that it presents to everybody. There's no question about what's going on."

Carolyn Wilker said, "For me, coming from paper, when I started, to this, is amazing. Our village is wanting to be involved, wanting to know where we're at."

Former North Star Mayor Griesdorn remarked, "We came from 61 years of the same clerk, the same books, which were done tremendously. We had a couple rough years after [the former fiscal officer] left. Once Carolyn's been on, the work with Carolyn, the work with the Treasurer's Office, local auditors, county auditor, and state auditor, it's helped us get back on track by far. Carolyn's definitely been the driving force behind that."

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A large coalition of statewide and local government organizations have expressed support for OhioCheckbook.com and local government transparency, including:

- Ohio Municipal League
- Ohio Township Association
- Ohio Association of School Business Officials
- Buckeye Association of School Administrators
- County Commissioner Association of Ohio
- County Auditor Association of Ohio
- Ohio Newspaper Association
- Ohio Society of CPAs
- Buckeye Institute
- Common Cause Ohio

For more information or to view a local government's website, visit the "Local Government" option on OhioCheckbook.com.

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