

PERRY

& Associates CPAs

PASSION *Beyond the Numbers*

**CENTRAL OHIO JOINT FIRE DISTRICT
KNOX COUNTY
REGULAR AUDIT
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023-2022**

OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE
KEITH FABER



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Columbus, Ohio 43215
ContactUs@ohioauditor.gov
800-282-0370

Board of Trustees
Central Ohio Joint Fire District
5138 Columbus Rd
Centerburg, OH 43011

We have reviewed the *Independent Auditor's Report* of the Central Ohio Joint Fire District, Knox County, prepared by Perry & Associates, Certified Public Accountants, A.C., for the audit period January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2023. Based upon this review, we have accepted these reports in lieu of the audit required by Section 117.11, Revised Code. The Auditor of State did not audit the accompanying financial statements and, accordingly, we are unable to express, and do not express an opinion on them.

Our review was made in reference to the applicable sections of legislative criteria, as reflected by the Ohio Constitution, and the Revised Code, policies, procedures and guidelines of the Auditor of State, regulations and grant requirements. The Central Ohio Joint Fire District is responsible for compliance with these laws and regulations.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith Faber".

Keith Faber
Auditor of State
Columbus, Ohio

December 12, 2024

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**CENTRAL OHIO JOINT FIRE DISTRICT
KNOX COUNTY**

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Central Ohio Joint Fire District
Knox County
5138 Columbus Road
Centerburg, Ohio 43011

To the Board of Trustees:

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Unmodified and Adverse Opinions

We have audited the financial statements of the Central Ohio Joint Fire District, Knox County, Ohio (the District), which comprises the cash balances, receipts and disbursements for each governmental fund type as of and for the years ended December 31, 2023 and 2022, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Unmodified Opinion on Regulatory Basis of Accounting

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the cash balances, receipts and disbursements for each governmental fund type as of and for the years ended December 31, 2023 and 2022, and the related notes to the financial statements, in accordance with the financial reporting provisions which Ohio Revised Code Section 117.38 and Ohio Administrative Code Section 117-2-03(C) permit, described in Note 2.

Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles

In our opinion, because of the significance of the matter discussed in the Basis for Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles section of our report, the accompanying financial statements do not present fairly, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, the financial position of the District, as of December 31, 2023 and 2022, or the changes in financial position thereof for the years then ended.

Basis for Opinions

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS) and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are required to be independent of the District, and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinions.

Basis for Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles

As described in Note 2 of the financial statements, the financial statements are prepared by the District on the basis of the financial reporting provisions of Ohio Revised Code Section 117.38 and Ohio Administrative Code Section 117-2-03(C), which is an accounting basis other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP), to satisfy these requirements. The effects on the financial statements of the variances between the regulatory basis of accounting described in Note 2 and accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, although not reasonably determinable, are presumed to be material and pervasive.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the financial reporting provisions Ohio Revised Code Section 117.38 and Ohio Administrative Code Section 117-2-03(C) permit. Management is also responsible for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the District's ability to continue as a going concern for twelve months beyond the financial statement date, including any currently known information that may raise substantial doubt shortly thereafter.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinions. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS and the financial audit standards in the Comptroller General of the United States' *Government Auditing Standards* will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS and *Government Auditing Standards*, we

- exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the District's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements (Continued)

- conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the District's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated September 25, 2024, on our consideration of the District's internal control over financial reporting and our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of that report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the District's internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the District's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.



Perry and Associates
Certified Public Accountants, A.C.
Marietta, Ohio

September 25, 2024

**CENTRAL OHIO JOINT FIRE DISTRICT
KNOX COUNTY**

**COMBINED STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS, AND
CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES (REGULATORY CASH BASIS)
ALL GOVERNMENTAL FUND TYPES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023**

	General	Debt Service	Capital Projects	Totals (Memorandum Only)
Cash Receipts				
Property and Other Local Taxes	\$ 1,803,154	\$ 28,436	\$ 53,422	\$ 1,885,012
Charges for Services	450,956	-	-	450,956
Licences, Permits, and Fees	10	-	-	10
Intergovernmental	97,386	-	-	97,386
Earnings on Investment	36,257	-	-	36,257
Miscellaneous	15,504	-	-	15,504
<i>Total Cash Receipts</i>	<u>2,403,267</u>	<u>28,436</u>	<u>53,422</u>	<u>2,485,125</u>
Cash Disbursements				
Current:				
Public Safety	1,894,881	-	-	1,894,881
Public Works	4,127	-	-	4,127
Capital Outlay	311,674	-	3,864	315,538
Debt Service:				
Principal Retirement	-	31,835	-	31,835
Interest and Other Fiscal Charges	-	35,795	-	35,795
<i>Total Cash Disbursements</i>	<u>2,210,682</u>	<u>67,630</u>	<u>3,864</u>	<u>2,282,176</u>
<i>Excess of Receipts Over (Under) Disbursements</i>	<u>192,585</u>	<u>(39,194)</u>	<u>49,558</u>	<u>202,949</u>
Other Financing Receipts (Disbursements)				
Transfers In	-	65,631	-	65,631
Transfers Out	-	-	(65,631)	(65,631)
Total Other Financing Receipts (Disbursements)	<u>-</u>	<u>65,631</u>	<u>(65,631)</u>	<u>-</u>
<i>Net Change in Fund Cash Balances</i>	192,585	26,437	(16,073)	202,949
<i>Fund Cash Balances, January 1</i>	<u>1,513,752</u>	<u>2,008</u>	<u>61,463</u>	<u>1,577,223</u>
<i>Fund Cash Balances, December 31</i>	<u>\$ 1,706,337</u>	<u>\$ 28,445</u>	<u>\$ 45,390</u>	<u>\$ 1,780,172</u>

The notes to the financial statements are an integral part of this statement.

Central Ohio Joint Fire District
Knox County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

Note 1 – Reporting Entity

The constitution and laws of the State of Ohio establish the rights and privileges of Central Ohio Joint Fire District, Knox County, (the District) as a body corporate and politic. A three-member Board of Trustees governs the District. Each political subdivision within the District appoints one member. Those subdivisions are Hillar Township, Milford Township, and the Village of Centerburg. The District provides fire protection and rescue services within the District and by contract to areas outside the District.

The District's management believes these financial statements present all activities for which the District is financially accountable

Note 2 – Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Basis of Presentation

The District's financial statements consist of a combined statement of receipts, disbursements and changes in fund balances (regulatory cash basis) for all governmental fund types and a combined statement of additions, deductions and changes in fund balances (regulatory cash basis) all fiduciary fund types which are organized on a fund type basis.

Fund Accounting

The District uses funds to maintain its financial records during the year. A fund is defined as a fiscal and accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts. The funds of the District are presented below:

General Fund The General Fund accounts for and reports all financial resources not accounted for and reported in another fund. The general fund balance is available to the District for any purpose provided it is expended or transferred according to the general laws of Ohio.

Debt Service Funds These funds account for and report financial resources that are restricted, committed, or assigned to expenditure for principal and interest. The District had the following significant Debt Service Funds: The District has a debt fund for the renovation of the fire house that was completed in 2020.

General (bond) (note) Retirement Fund – This fund receives receipts from the Miscellaneous Capital Projects Fund and through property taxes to pay principal and interest payments on the building improvement bonds. The District has a debt fund for the renovation of the fire house that was completed in 2020.

Capital Project Funds These funds account for and report financial resources that are restricted, committed, or assigned to expenditure for capital outlays, including the acquisition or construction of capital facilities and other capital assets. The District had the following significant capital project funds: Monies are transferred from this fund to the debt service fund to make payments with Park National Bank.

Miscellaneous Capital Projects Fund – This fund receives receipts through property taxes, intergovernmental revenues, and debt proceeds to complete building improvements and other projects. Monies are transferred from this fund to the debt service fund to make payments with First Knox National Bank.

Central Ohio Joint Fire District
Knox County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

Note 2 – Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

Basis of Accounting

These financial statements follow the accounting basis permitted by the financial reporting provisions of Ohio Revised Code Section 117.38 and Ohio Administrative Code Section 117-2-03 (C). This basis is similar to the cash receipts and disbursements accounting basis. The District recognizes receipts when received in cash rather than when earned, and recognizes disbursements when paid rather than when a liability is incurred. Budgetary presentations report budgetary expenditures when a commitment is made (i.e., when an encumbrance is approved).

These statements include adequate disclosure of material matters, as the financial reporting provisions of Ohio Revised Code Section 117.38 and Ohio Administrative Code Section 117-2-03 (C) permit.

Budgetary Process

The Ohio Revised Code requires that each fund be budgeted annually.

Appropriations Budgetary expenditures (that is, disbursements and encumbrances) may not exceed appropriations at the fund level of control and appropriations may not exceed estimated resources. The Board of Trustees must annually approve appropriation measures and subsequent amendments. Appropriations lapse at year end.

Estimated Resources Estimated resources include estimates of cash to be received (budgeted receipts) plus cash as of January 1. The County Budget Commission must approve estimated resources.

Encumbrances The Ohio Revised Code requires the District to reserve (encumber) appropriations when individual commitments are made. Encumbrances outstanding at year end are canceled, and reappropriated in the subsequent year.

A summary of 2023 budgetary activity appears in Note 3.

Deposits and Investments

The District's accounting basis includes investments as assets. This basis does not record disbursements for investment purchases or receipts for investment sales. This basis records gains or losses at the time of sale as receipts or disbursements, respectively.

Money market mutual funds are recorded at share values the mutual funds report. Investment in STAR Ohio is measured at the net asset value (NAV) per share provided by STAR Ohio. The NAV per share is calculated on an amortized cost basis that provides an NAV per share that approximates fair value.

Capital Assets

The District records disbursements for acquisitions of property, plant, and equipment when paid. The accompanying financial statements do not report these items as assets.

Accumulated Leave

In certain circumstances, such as upon leaving employment, employees are entitled to cash payments for unused leave. The financial statements do not include a liability for unpaid leave.

Central Ohio Joint Fire District
Knox County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

Note 2 – Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

Fund Balance

Fund balance is divided into five classifications based primarily on the extent to which the District must observe constraints imposed upon the use of its governmental-fund resources. The classifications are as follows:

Nonspendable The District classifies assets as *nonspendable* when legally or contractually required to maintain the amounts intact. For regulatory purposes, nonspendable fund balance includes unclaimed monies that are required to be held for five years before they may be utilized by the District and the nonspendable portion of the corpus in permanent funds.

Restricted Fund balance is *restricted* when constraints placed on the use of resources are either externally imposed by creditors (such as through debt covenants), grantors, contributors, or laws or regulations of other governments; or is imposed by law through constitutional provisions.

Committed Trustees can *commit* amounts via formal action (resolution). The District must adhere to these commitments unless the Trustees amend the resolution. Committed fund balance also incorporates contractual obligations to the extent that existing resources in the fund have been specifically committed to satisfy contractual requirements.

Assigned Assigned fund balances are intended for specific purposes but do not meet the criteria to be classified as *restricted* or *committed*. For regulatory purposes, assigned fund balance in the general fund is limited to encumbrances outstanding at year end.

Unassigned Unassigned fund balance is the residual classification for the general fund and includes amounts not included in the other classifications. In other governmental funds, the unassigned classification is used only to report a deficit balance.

The District applies restricted resources first when expenditures are incurred for purposes for which either restricted or unrestricted (committed, assigned, and unassigned) amounts are available. Similarly, within unrestricted fund balance, committed amounts are reduced first followed by assigned, and then unassigned amounts when expenditures are incurred for purposes for which amounts in any of the unrestricted fund balance classifications could be used.

For regulatory purposes, limited disclosure related to fund balance is included in Note 10.

Note 3 – Budgetary Activity

Budgetary activity for the year ending December 31, 2023 follows:

2023 Budgeted vs. Actual Receipts			
Fund Type	Budgeted Receipts	Actual Receipts	Variance
General	\$ 2,141,637	\$ 2,403,267	\$ 261,630
Debt Service	66,067	28,436	(37,631)
Capital Projects	78,564	53,422	(25,142)
Total	\$ 2,286,268	\$ 2,485,125	\$ 198,857

Central Ohio Joint Fire District
Knox County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

Note 3 – Budgetary Activity (Continued)

Budgetary activity for the year ending December 31, 2023 follows:

2023 Budgeted vs. Actual Budgetary Basis Expenditures			
Fund Type	Appropriation Authority	Budgetary Expenditures	Variance
General	\$ 2,401,886	\$ 2,210,682	\$ 191,204
Debt Service	65,631	67,630	(1,999)
Capital Projects	69,495	3,864	65,631
Total	\$ 2,537,012	\$ 2,282,176	\$ 254,836

Note 4 – Deposits and Investments

The District maintains a deposits and investments pool all funds use. The Ohio Revised Code prescribes allowable deposits and investments. The carrying amount of deposits and investments at December 31 was as follows:

	2023
Demand deposits	\$1,069,315
STAR Ohio	710,857
Total deposits and investments	\$1,780,172

Deposits

Deposits are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or collateralized through the Ohio Pooled Collateral System (OPCS), a collateral pool of eligible securities deposited with a qualified trustee and pledged to the Treasurer of State to secure the repayment of all public monies deposited in the financial institution.

Investments

Investments in STAR Ohio and mutual funds are not evidenced by securities that exist in physical or book-entry form.

Note 5 – Taxes

Property Taxes

Real property taxes become a lien on January 1 preceding the October 1 date for which the Trustees adopted tax rates. The State Board of Tax Equalization adjusts these rates for inflation. Property taxes are also reduced for applicable non-business, owner occupancy, and homestead exemption credits and/or homestead and rollback deductions. The financial statements include these credits and/or deduction amounts the State pays as Intergovernmental Receipts. Payments are due to the County by December 31. If the property owner elects to pay semiannually, the first half is due December 31. The second half payment is due the following June 20.

Public utilities are also taxed on personal and real property located within the District.

The County is responsible for assessing property and for billing, collecting, and distributing all property taxes on behalf of the District.

Central Ohio Joint Fire District
Knox County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

Note 6 – Risk Management

Workers' Compensation

Workers' Compensation coverage is provided by the State of Ohio. The District pays the State Workers' Compensation System a premium based on a rate per \$100 of salaries. This rate is calculated based on accident history and administrative costs.

Risk Pool Membership

The District belongs to the Ohio Plan Risk Management, Inc. (OPRM) (the "Plan"), a unincorporated non-profit association providing a formalized, jointly administered self-insurance risk management programs and other administrative services to Ohio governments ("Members"). The Plan is legally separate from its member governments.

Pursuant to Section 2744.081 of the Ohio Revised Code, the plan provides property, liability, errors and omissions, law enforcement, automobile, excess liability, crime, surety and bond, inland marine and other coverages to its members sold through fourteen appointed independent agents in the State of Ohio.

Effective November 1, 2016, the OPRM elected to participate in a property loss corridor deductible. The property corridor includes losses paid between 70% and 75%. In 2018, the casualty loss corridor was eliminated and the property corridor was adjusted to losses paid between 65% and 70%. Effective November 1, 2019, the property loss corridor was adjusted to losses between 60% and 67.5% and has remain unchanged. OPRM had 801 members as of December 31, 2023.

The Pool's audited financial statements conform with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, with the exception of a qualified opinion related to recording premiums and membership fees earned in full as of December 31, 2023. Those premiums and fees should be earned pro-rata over the individual coverage and membership periods of each policy. The financial statements reported the following assets, liabilities and equity at December 31, 2023.

Assets	\$ 23,113,696
Liabilities	<u>(16,078,587)</u>
Members' Equity	<u>\$ 7,035,109</u>

You can read the complete audited financial statements for OPRM at the Plan's website, www.ohioplan.org.

Note 7 – Defined Benefit Pension Plans

Ohio Police and Fire Retirement System

Several District certified Fire Fighters belong to the Ohio Police and Fire Pension Fund (OP&F). OP&F is a cost-sharing, multiple-employer plan. The Ohio Revised Code prescribes this plan's benefits, which include postretirement healthcare and survivor and disability benefits.

The Ohio Revised Code also prescribes contribution rates. OP&F participants contributed 12.25 percent of their wages. The District contributed to OP&F an amount equal to 24 percent of full-time fire fighters' wages. The District has paid all contributions required through December 31, 2023.

Central Ohio Joint Fire District
Knox County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

Note 7 – Defined Benefit Pension Plans (Continued)

Ohio Public Employees Retirement System

Some District employees belong to the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS). OPERS is a cost-sharing, multiple-employer plan. The Ohio Revised Code prescribes this plan’s benefits, which include postretirement healthcare and survivor and disability benefits.

The Ohio Revised Code also prescribes contribution rates. OPERS members contributed 10 percent of their gross salaries, and the District contributed an amount equaling 14 percent of participants’ gross salaries. The District has paid all contributions required through December 31, 2023.

Social Security

Some District employees contributed to Social Security. This plan provides retirement benefits, including survivor and disability benefits to participants.

Employees contributed 6.2 percent of their gross salaries. The District contributed an amount equal to 6.2 percent of participants’ gross salaries. The District has paid all contributions required through December 31, 2023.

Note 8 – Postemployment Benefits

Both OP&F and OPERS offer cost-sharing, multiple-employer defined benefit postemployment plans. OPERS offers a health reimbursement arrangement (HRA) allowance to benefit recipients meeting certain age and service credit requirements. The HRA is an account funded by OPERS that provides tax-free reimbursement for qualified medical expenses such as monthly post-tax insurance premiums, deductibles, co-insurance, and co-pays incurred by eligible benefit recipients and their dependents. OP&F uses a stipend-based health care model. A stipend funded by OP&F is placed in individual Health Reimbursement Accounts that retirees use to be reimbursed for health care expenses. For calendar year 2023, the portion of OPERS employer contributions allocated to health care was 0 percent for members in the traditional pension plan and 2 percent for members in the combined plan. For 2023, the portion of employer contributions OPERS allocated to health care for members in the member-directed plan was 4.0 percent; however, a portion of the health care rate was funded with reserves. OP&F contributes 0.5 percent to fund these benefits.

Note 9 – Debt

Debt outstanding at December 31, 2023, was as follows:

	Principal	Interest Rate
General Obligation Bonds	\$743,833	4.86%
Total	\$743,833	

The District issued general obligation bonds to finance the renovation of the fire house located at 5138 Columbus Road Centerburg, OH – Knox County. The District’s taxing authority collateralized the bonds.

The mortgage revenue bond covenant requires the District to establish and fund a debt service reserve fund, included as a debt service fund. The balance in the fund at December 31, 2023, is \$28,445.

Central Ohio Joint Fire District
Knox County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

Note 9 – Debt (Continued)

Amortization of the above debt, including interest, is scheduled as follows:

Year Ending December 31:	General Obligation Bonds
2024	\$ 63,530
2025	63,530
2026	63,530
2027	63,530
2028	63,530
2029-2033	317,650
2034-2038	317,650
2039	15,884
Total	<u>\$ 968,834</u>

Note 10 – Fund Balances

Included in fund balance are amounts the District cannot spend, including the balance of unclaimed monies, which cannot be spent for five years and the unexpendable corpus of the permanent funds. Encumbrances are commitments related to unperformed contracts for goods or services. Encumbrance accounting is utilized to the extent necessary to assure effective budgetary control and accountability and to facilitate effective cash planning and control. At year end the balances of these amounts were \$0.

The fund balance of special revenue funds is either restricted or committed. The fund balance of debt service funds and capital projects funds are restricted, committed, or assigned. The fund balance of permanent funds that is not part of the nonspendable corpus is either restricted or committed. These restricted, committed, and assigned amounts in the special revenue, debt service, capital projects, and permanent funds would including the outstanding encumbrances. In the general fund, outstanding encumbrances are considered assigned.

**CENTRAL OHIO JOINT FIRE DISTRICT
KNOX COUNTY**

**COMBINED STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, DISBURSEMENTS, AND
CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES (REGULATORY CASH BASIS)
ALL GOVERNMENTAL FUND TYPES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2022**

	General	Debt Service	Capital Projects	Totals (Memorandum Only)
Cash Receipts				
Property and Other Local Taxes	\$ 1,788,404	\$ -	\$ 69,171	\$ 1,857,575
Charges for Services	381,880	-	-	381,880
Licences, Permits, and Fees	700	-	-	700
Intergovernmental	41,162	-	12,001	53,163
Earnings on Investment	8,250	-	-	8,250
Miscellaneous	3,750	-	200	3,950
<i>Total Cash Receipts</i>	<u>2,224,146</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>81,372</u>	<u>2,305,518</u>
Cash Disbursements				
Current:				
Public Safety	1,769,729	-	-	1,769,729
Public Works	6,308	-	-	6,308
Capital Outlay	-	-	186,422	186,422
Debt Service:				
Principal Retirement	-	30,918	-	30,918
Interest and Other Fiscal Charges	-	30,270	-	30,270
<i>Total Cash Disbursements</i>	<u>1,776,037</u>	<u>61,188</u>	<u>186,422</u>	<u>2,023,647</u>
<i>Net Change in Fund Cash Balances</i>	448,109	(61,188)	(105,050)	281,871
<i>Fund Cash Balances, January 1</i>	<u>1,065,643</u>	<u>63,196</u>	<u>166,513</u>	<u>1,295,352</u>
<i>Fund Cash Balances, December 31</i>	<u>\$ 1,513,752</u>	<u>\$ 2,008</u>	<u>\$ 61,463</u>	<u>\$ 1,577,223</u>

The notes to the financial statements are an integral part of this statement.

Central Ohio Joint Fire District
Knox County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

Note 1 – Reporting Entity

The constitution and laws of the State of Ohio establish the rights and privileges of Central Ohio Joint Fire District, Knox County, (the District) as a body corporate and politic. A three-member Board of Trustees governs the District. Each political subdivision within the District appoints one member. Those subdivisions are Hillar Township, Milford Township, and the Village of Centerburg. The District provides fire protection and rescue services within the District and by contract to areas outside the District.

The District's management believes these financial statements present all activities for which the District is financially accountable.

Note 2 – Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Basis of Presentation

The District's financial statements consist of a combined statement of receipts, disbursements and changes in fund balances (regulatory cash basis) for all governmental fund types and a combined statement of additions, deductions and changes in fund balances (regulatory cash basis) all fiduciary fund types which are organized on a fund type basis.

Fund Accounting

The District uses funds to maintain its financial records during the year. A fund is defined as a fiscal and accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts. The funds of the District are presented below:

General Fund The General Fund accounts for and reports all financial resources not accounted for and reported in another fund. The general fund balance is available to the District for any purpose provided it is expended or transferred according to the general laws of Ohio.

Debt Service Funds These funds account for and report financial resources that are restricted, committed, or assigned to expenditure for principal and interest. The District had the following significant Debt Service Funds: The District has a debt fund for the renovation of the fire house that was completed in 2020.

Capital Project Funds These funds account for and report financial resources that are restricted, committed, or assigned to expenditure for capital outlays, including the acquisition or construction of capital facilities and other capital assets. The District had the following significant capital project funds: Monies are transferred from this fund to the debt service fund to make payments with First Knox National Bank.

Basis of Accounting

These financial statements follow the accounting basis permitted by the financial reporting provisions of Ohio Revised Code Section 117.38 and Ohio Administrative Code Section 117-2-03 (C). This basis is similar to the cash receipts and disbursements accounting basis. The Board recognizes receipts when received in cash rather than when earned, and recognizes disbursements when paid rather than when a liability is incurred. Budgetary presentations report budgetary expenditures when a commitment is made (i.e., when an encumbrance is approved).

These statements include adequate disclosure of material matters, as the financial reporting provisions of Ohio Revised Code Section 117.38 and Ohio Administrative Code Section 117-2-03 (C) permit.

Budgetary Process

The Ohio Revised Code requires that each fund be budgeted annually.

Central Ohio Joint Fire District
Knox County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

Note 2 – Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

Appropriations Budgetary expenditures (that is, disbursements and encumbrances) may not exceed appropriations at the fund level of control, and appropriations may not exceed estimated resources. The Board of Trustees must annually approve appropriation measures and subsequent amendments. Unencumbered appropriations lapse at year end.

Estimated Resources Estimated resources include estimates of cash to be received (budgeted receipts) plus unencumbered cash as of January 1. The County Budget Commission must approve estimated resources.

Encumbrances The Ohio Revised Code requires the District to reserve (encumber) appropriations when individual commitments are made. Encumbrances outstanding at year end are canceled, and reappropriated in the subsequent year.

A summary of 2022 budgetary activity appears in Note 3.

Deposits and Investments

The District's accounting basis includes investments as assets. This basis does not record disbursements for investment purchases or receipts for investment sales. This basis records gains or losses at the time of sale as receipts or disbursements, respectively.

Money market mutual funds are recorded at share values the mutual funds report. Investment in STAR Ohio is measured at the net asset value (NAV) per share provided by STAR Ohio. The NAV per share is calculated on an amortized cost basis that provides an NAV per share that approximates fair value.

Capital Assets

The District records disbursements for acquisitions of property, plant, and equipment when paid. The accompanying financial statements do not report these items as assets.

Accumulated Leave

In certain circumstances, such as upon leaving employment, employees are entitled to cash payments for unused leave. The financial statements do not include a liability for unpaid leave.

Fund Balance

Fund balance is divided into five classifications based primarily on the extent to which the District must observe constraints imposed upon the use of its governmental-fund resources. The classifications are as follows:

Nonspendable The District classifies assets as *nonspendable* when legally or contractually required to maintain the amounts intact. For regulatory purposes, nonspendable fund balance includes unclaimed monies that are required to be held for five years before they may be utilized by the District and the nonspendable portion of the corpus in permanent funds.

Restricted Fund balance is *restricted* when constraints placed on the use of resources are either externally imposed by creditors (such as through debt covenants), grantors, contributors, or laws or regulations of other governments; or is imposed by law through constitutional provisions.

Central Ohio Joint Fire District
Knox County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

Note 2 – Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

Fund Balance (Continued)

Committed Trustees can *commit* amounts via formal action (resolution). The District must adhere to these commitments unless the Trustees amend the resolution. Committed fund balance also incorporates contractual obligations to the extent that existing resources in the fund have been specifically committed to satisfy contractual requirements.

Assigned Assigned fund balances are intended for specific purposes but do not meet the criteria to be classified as *restricted* or *committed*. For regulatory purposes, assigned fund balance in the general fund is limited to encumbrances outstanding at year end.

Unassigned Unassigned fund balance is the residual classification for the general fund and includes amounts not included in the other classifications. In other governmental funds, the unassigned classification is used only to report a deficit balance.

The District applies restricted resources first when expenditures are incurred for purposes for which either restricted or unrestricted (committed, assigned, and unassigned) amounts are available. Similarly, within unrestricted fund balance, committed amounts are reduced first followed by assigned, and then unassigned amounts when expenditures are incurred for purposes for which amounts in any of the unrestricted fund balance classifications could be used.

For regulatory purposes, limited disclosure related to fund balance is included in Note 10.

Note 3 – Budgetary Activity

Budgetary activity for the year ending December 31, 2022 follows:

2022 Budgeted vs. Actual Receipts			
Fund Type	Budgeted Receipts	Actual Receipts	Variance
General	\$ 2,947,668	\$ 2,224,146	\$ (723,522)
Capital Projects	77,000	81,372	4,372
Total	\$ 3,024,668	\$ 2,305,518	\$ (719,150)

2022 Budgeted vs. Actual Budgetary Basis Expenditures			
Fund Type	Appropriation Authority	Budgetary Expenditures	Variance
General	\$ 1,902,596	\$ 1,776,037	\$ 126,559
Debt Service	61,188	61,188	-
Capital Projects	192,000	186,422	5,578
Total	\$ 2,155,784	\$ 2,023,647	\$ 132,137

Central Ohio Joint Fire District
Knox County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

Note 4 – Deposits and Investments

The District maintains a deposits and investments pool all funds use. The Ohio Revised Code prescribes allowable deposits and investments. The carrying amount of deposits and investments at December 31 was as follows:

	<u>2022</u>
Demand deposits	\$ 1,291,353
STAR Ohio	285,870
Total deposits and investments	<u>\$ 1,577,223</u>

Deposits

Deposits are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or collateralized through the Ohio Pooled Collateral System (OPCS), a collateral pool of eligible securities deposited with a qualified trustee and pledged to the Treasurer of State to secure the repayment of all public monies deposited in the financial institution.

Investments

Investments in STAR Ohio and mutual funds are not evidenced by securities that exist in physical or book-entry form.

Note 5 – Taxes

Property Taxes

Real property taxes become a lien on January 1 preceding the October 1 date for which the Trustees adopted tax rates. The State Board of Tax Equalization adjusts these rates for inflation. Property taxes are also reduced for applicable non-business, owner occupancy, and homestead exemption credits and/or homestead and rollback deductions. The financial statements include these credits and/or deduction amounts the State pays as Intergovernmental Receipts. Payments are due to the County by December 31. If the property owner elects to pay semiannually, the first half is due December 31. The second half payment is due the following June 20.

The County is responsible for assessing property and for billing, collecting, and distributing all property taxes on behalf of the District.

Note 6 – Risk Management

Workers' Compensation

Workers' Compensation coverage is provided by the State of Ohio. The District pays the State Workers' Compensation System a premium based on a rate per \$100 of salaries. This rate is calculated based on accident history and administrative costs.

Risk Pool Membership

The Government belongs to the Ohio Plan Risk Management, Inc. (OPRM) (the "Plan"), a non-assessable, unincorporated non-profit association providing a formalized, jointly administered self-insurance risk management program and other administrative services to Ohio governments ("Members"). The Plan is legally separate from its member governments.

Central Ohio Joint Fire District
Knox County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

Note 6 – Risk Management (Continued)

Risk Pool Membership (Continued)

Pursuant to Section 2744.081 of the Ohio Revised Code, the plan provides property, liability, errors and omissions, law enforcement, automobile, excess liability, crime, surety and bond, inland marine and other coverages to its members sold through fourteen appointed independent agents in the State of Ohio.

Effective November 1, 2016, the OPRM elected to participate in a property loss corridor deductible. The property corridor includes losses paid between 70% and 75%. In 2018, the casualty loss corridor was eliminated and the property corridor was adjusted to losses paid between 65% and 70%. Effective November 1, 2019, the property loss corridor was adjusted to losses between 60% and 67.5% and has remain unchanged. OPRM had 773 members as of December 31, 2022.

The Pool's audited financial statements conform with generally accepted accounting principles, and reported the following assets, liabilities and equity at December 31, 2022.

Assets	\$ 21,662,291
Liabilities	<u>(18,158,351)</u>
Members' Equity	<u>\$ 3,503,940</u>

You can read the complete audited financial statements for OPRM at the Plan's website, www.ohioplan.org.

Note 7 – Defined Benefit Pension Plans

Ohio Police and Fire Retirement System

Several District certified Fire Fighters belong to the Ohio Police and Fire Pension Fund (OP&F). OP&F is a cost-sharing, multiple-employer plan. The Ohio Revised Code prescribes this plan's benefits, which include postretirement healthcare and survivor and disability benefits.

The Ohio Revised Code also prescribes contribution rates. OP&F participants contributed 12.25 percent of their wages. The District contributed to OP&F an amount equal to 24 percent of full-time fire fighters' wages. The District has paid all contributions required through December 31, 2022.

Ohio Public Employees Retirement System

Two District employees belong to the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS). OPERS is a cost-sharing, multiple-employer plan. The Ohio Revised Code prescribes this plan's benefits, which include postretirement healthcare and survivor and disability benefits.

The Ohio Revised Code also prescribes contribution rates. OPERS members contributed 10 percent of their gross salaries, and the District contributed an amount equaling 14 percent of participants' gross salaries. The District has paid all contributions required through December 31, 2022.

Social Security

Some District employees contributed to Social Security. This plan provides retirement benefits, including survivor and disability benefits to participants.

Employees contributed 6.2 percent of their gross salaries. The District contributed an amount equal to 6.2 percent of participants' gross salaries. The District has paid all contributions required through December 31, 2022.

Central Ohio Joint Fire District
Knox County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

Note 8 – Postemployment Benefits

Both OP&F and OPERS offer cost-sharing, multiple-employer defined benefit postemployment plans, which include multiple health care plans including medical coverage, prescription drug coverage, deposits to a Health Reimbursement Arrangement, and Medicare Part B premium reimbursements, to qualifying benefit recipients. OP&F contributes 0.5 percent of the employer contribution to fund these benefits. The portion of employer contributions allocated to health care for OPERS members in the traditional pension plan and combined plan was 0 percent during calendar year 2022. The portion of employer contributions allocated to health care for OPERS members in the member-directed plan was 4.0 percent during calendar year 2022.

Beginning January 1, 2019, OP&F changed its retiree health care model to a stipend-based health care model. A stipend funded by OP&F was placed in individual Health Reimbursement Accounts that retirees use to be reimbursed for health care expenses.

Effective January 1, 2022, OPERS discontinued the group plans currently offered to non-Medicare retirees and re-employed retirees. Instead, eligible non-Medicare retirees will select an individual medical plan. OPERS will provide a subsidy or allowance via an HRA allowance to those retirees who meet health care eligibility requirements. Retirees will be able to seek reimbursement for plan premiums and other qualified medical expenses.

Note 9 – Debt

Debt outstanding at December 31, 2022, was as follows:

	Principal	Interest Rate
General Obligation Bonds	\$775,688	3.85%
Total	\$775,688	

The District issued general obligation bonds to finance the renovation of the fire house located at 5138 Columbus Road Centerburg, OH – Knox County. The District’s taxing authority collateralized the bonds.

The mortgage revenue bond covenant requires the District to establish and fund a debt service reserve fund, included as a debt service fund. The balance in the fund at December 31, 2022, is \$2,008.

Amortization of the above debt, including interest, is scheduled as follows:

Year Ending December 31:	General Obligation Bonds
2023	\$ 62,945
2024	63,530
2025	63,530
2026	63,530
2027	63,530
2028-2032	317,650
2033-2037	317,650
2038-2039	79,414
Total	\$ 1,031,779

Central Ohio Joint Fire District
Knox County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

Note 10 – Fund Balances

Included in fund balance are amounts the District cannot spend, including the balance of unclaimed monies, which cannot be spent for five years and the unexpendable corpus of the permanent funds. Encumbrances are commitments related to unperformed contracts for goods or services. Encumbrance accounting is utilized to the extent necessary to assure effective budgetary control and accountability and to facilitate effective cash planning and control. At year end the balances of these amounts were as follows:

<u>Fund Balances</u>	<u>General</u>
Outstanding Encumbrances	\$ 100
Total	<u>\$ 100</u>

The fund balance of special revenue funds is either restricted or committed. The fund balance of debt service funds and capital projects funds are restricted, committed, or assigned. The fund balance of permanent funds that is not part of the nonspendable corpus is either restricted or committed. These restricted, committed, and assigned amounts in the special revenue, debt service, capital projects, and permanent funds would including the outstanding encumbrances. In the general fund, outstanding encumbrances are considered assigned.

Note 11 – COVID-19

The United States and the State of Ohio declared a state of emergency in March of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Ohio's state of emergency ended in June, 2021 while the national state of emergency continues. During 2022, the District received COVID-19 funding. The financial impact of COVID-19 and the continuing emergency measures will impact subsequent periods of the District. The impact on the District's future operating costs, revenues, and additional recovery from emergency funding, either federal or state, cannot be estimated. The District's investment portfolio fluctuates with market conditions, and due to market volatility, the amount of gains or losses that will be realized in subsequent periods, if any, cannot be determined.

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER
FINANCIAL REPORTING AND ON COMPLIANCE AND OTHER MATTERS
REQUIRED BY GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS**

Central Ohio Joint Fire District
Knox County
5138 Columbus Road
Centerburg, Ohio 43011

To the District Board of Trustees:

We have audited, in accordance with the auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States (*Government Auditing Standards*), the financial statements of the governmental activities of the Central Ohio Joint Fire District, Knox County, (the District) as of and for the years ended December 31, 2023 and 2022, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the District's basic financial statements and have issued our report thereon dated September 25, 2024.

Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered the District's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the District's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the District's internal control.

A deficiency in internal control exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct misstatements on a timely basis. A material weakness is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the District's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. A significant deficiency is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that were not identified.

Report on Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the District's financial statements are free from material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the financial statements. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under Government Auditing Standards.

Purpose of This Report

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the District's internal control or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with Government Auditing Standards in considering the District's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Perry & Associates CPAs A.C." in a cursive script.

Perry and Associates
Certified Public Accountants, A.C.
Marietta, Ohio

September 25, 2024

**CENTRAL OHIO JOINT FIRE DISTRICT
KNOX COUNTY**

**SCHEDULE OF PRIOR AUDIT FINDINGS
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023 AND 2022**

Finding Number	Finding Summary	Status	Additional Information
2021-001	Financial Reporting	Mostly Corrected	Only two debt payments were improperly allocated between principal and interest payments.
2021-002	Ohio Revised Code 5705.41(D)	Mostly Corrected	Only one disbursement was not properly encumbered.

OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE KEITH FABER



CENTRAL OHIO JOINT FIRE DISTRICT

KNOX COUNTY

AUDITOR OF STATE OF OHIO CERTIFICATION

This is a true and correct copy of the report, which is required to be filed pursuant to Section 117.26, Revised Code, and which is filed in the Office of the Ohio Auditor of State in Columbus, Ohio.



Certified for Release 12/24/2024

65 East State Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215
Phone: 614-466-4514 or 800-282-0370

This report is a matter of public record and is available online at
www.ohioauditor.gov