



Mary Taylor, CPA
Auditor of State

**GRATIS TOWNSHIP
PREBLE COUNTY**

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Mary Taylor, CPA
Auditor of State

Gratis Township
Preble County
P.O. Box 24
West Elkton, Ohio 45070

To the Board of Trustees:

As you are aware, the Auditor of State's Office (AOS) must modify the *Independent Accountants' Report* we provide on your financial statements due to an interpretation from the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA). While AOS does not legally require your government to prepare financial statements pursuant to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), the AICPA interpretation requires auditors to formally acknowledge that you did not prepare your financial statements in accordance with GAAP. Our Report includes an adverse opinion relating to GAAP presentation and measurement requirements, but does not imply the amounts the statements present are misstated under the non-GAAP basis you follow. The AOS report also includes an opinion on the financial statements you prepared using the cash basis and financial statement format the AOS permits.

Mary Taylor

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September 2, 2009

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Mary Taylor, CPA

Auditor of State

INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REPORT

Gratis Township
Preble County
P.O. Box 24
West Elkton, Ohio 45070

To the Board of Trustees:

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Gratis Township, Preble County, Ohio (the Township), as of and for the years ended December 31, 2008 and 2007. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Township's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in the Comptroller General of the United States' *Government Auditing Standards*. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to reasonably assure whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. The Township processes its financial transactions with the Auditor of State's Uniform Accounting Network (UAN). *Government Auditing Standards* considers this service to impair the independence of the Auditor of State to audit the Township because the Auditor of State designed, developed, implemented, and as requested, operates UAN. However, *Government Auditing Standards* permits the Auditor of State to audit and opine on this entity, because Ohio Revised Code § 117.101 requires the Auditor of State to provide UAN services, and Ohio Revised Code §§ 117.11(B) and 115.56 mandate the Auditor of State to audit Ohio governments. We believe our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

As described more fully in Note 1, the Township has prepared these financial statements using accounting practices the Auditor of State prescribes or permits. These practices differ from accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP). Although we cannot reasonably determine the effects on the financial statements of the variances between these regulatory accounting practices and GAAP, we presume they are material.

Instead of the combined funds the accompanying financial statements present, GAAP require presenting entity wide statements and also presenting the Township's larger (i.e. major) funds separately. While the Township does not follow GAAP, generally accepted auditing standards requires us to include the following paragraph if the statements do not substantially conform to GAAP presentation requirements. The Auditor of State permits, but does not require townships to reformat their statements. The Township has elected not to follow GAAP statement formatting requirements. The following paragraph does not imply the amounts reported are materially misstated under the accounting basis the Auditor of State permits. Our opinion on the fair presentation of the amounts reported pursuant to its non-GAAP basis is in the second following paragraph.

In our opinion, because of the effects of the matter discussed in the preceding two paragraphs, the financial statements referred to above for the years ended December 31, 2008 and 2007 do not present fairly, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, the financial position of the Township as of December 31, 2008 and 2007, or its changes in financial position for the years then ended.

Corporate Centre of Blue Ash / 11117 Kenwood Rd. / Blue Ash, OH 45242

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Also, in our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the combined fund cash balances and reserves for encumbrances of Gratis Township, Preble County, Ohio, as of December 31, 2008 and 2007, and its combined cash receipts and disbursements for the years then ended on the accounting basis Note 1 describes.

The Township has not presented Management's Discussion and Analysis, which accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America has determined is necessary to supplement, although not required to be part of, the financial statements.

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated September 2, 2009, on our consideration of the Township'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. While we did not opine on the internal control over financial reporting or on compliance, that report describes the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance, and the results of that testing. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*. You should read it in conjunction with this report in assessing the results of our audit.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary Taylor, CPA
Auditor of State

September 2, 2009

**GRATIS TOWNSHIP
PREBLE COUNTY**

**COMBINED STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS, CASH DISBURSEMENTS, AND
CHANGES IN FUND CASH BALANCES
ALL GOVERNMENTAL FUND TYPES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2008**

	<u>General</u>	<u>Special Revenue</u>	<u>Totals (Memorandum Only)</u>
Cash Receipts:			
Property and Other Local Taxes	\$26,081	\$252,385	\$278,466
Charges for Services		45,672	45,672
Licenses, Permits, and Fees		36,415	36,415
Intergovernmental	27,336	142,107	169,443
Earnings on Investments	1,324	856	2,180
Miscellaneous	8,623	23,750	32,373
	<u>63,364</u>	<u>501,185</u>	<u>564,549</u>
Total Cash Receipts			
Cash Disbursements:			
Current:			
General Government	38,721	181,157	219,878
Public Safety		45,672	45,672
Public Works		174,652	174,652
Health	11,048	66,754	77,802
Capital Outlay	4,283	7,030	11,313
Debt Service:			
Redemption of Principal		17,184	17,184
Interest and Other Fiscal Charges		1,289	1,289
	<u>54,052</u>	<u>493,738</u>	<u>547,790</u>
Total Cash Disbursements			
Total Receipts Over Disbursements	<u>9,312</u>	<u>7,447</u>	<u>16,759</u>
Fund Cash Balances, January 1	<u>37,086</u>	<u>147,838</u>	<u>184,924</u>
Fund Cash Balances, December 31	<u>\$46,398</u>	<u>\$155,285</u>	<u>\$201,683</u>
Reserve for Encumbrances, December 31	<u>\$519</u>	<u>\$2,128</u>	<u>\$2,647</u>

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

**GRATIS TOWNSHIP
PREBLE COUNTY**

**STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS, CASH DISBURSEMENTS, AND
CHANGE IN FUND CASH BALANCE -PRIVATE PURPOSE TRUST
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2008**

	<u>Private Purpose Trust</u>
Non-Operating Cash Receipts:	
Earnings on Investments	<u>237</u>
Total Non-Operating Cash Receipts	<u>237</u>
Non-Operating Cash Disbursements:	
Other Non-Operating Cash Disbursements	<u>174</u>
Total Non-Operating Cash Disbursements	<u>174</u>
Net Receipts Over Disbursements	63
Fund Cash Balances, January 1	<u>4,663</u>
Fund Cash Balances, December 31	<u><u>\$4,726</u></u>

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

**GRATIS TOWNSHIP
PREBLE COUNTY**

**COMBINED STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS, CASH DISBURSEMENTS, AND
CHANGES IN FUND CASH BALANCES
ALL GOVERNMENTAL FUND TYPES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2007**

	<u>General</u>	<u>Special Revenue</u>	<u>Totals (Memorandum Only)</u>
Cash Receipts:			
Property and Other Local Taxes	\$28,501	\$276,634	\$305,135
Charges for Services		50,543	50,543
Licenses, Permits, and Fees		29,349	29,349
Intergovernmental	31,211	116,778	147,989
Earnings on Investments	1,446	750	2,196
Miscellaneous	10,345	15,644	25,989
	<u>71,503</u>	<u>489,698</u>	<u>561,201</u>
Cash Disbursements:			
Current:			
General Government	33,866	179,151	213,017
Public Safety		50,543	50,543
Public Works	1,668	184,238	185,906
Health	10,330	57,725	68,055
Capital Outlay	6,465	3,166	9,631
Debt Service:			
Redemption of Principal	4,703		4,703
Interest and Other Fiscal Charges	702		702
	<u>57,734</u>	<u>474,823</u>	<u>532,557</u>
Total Receipts Over Disbursements	<u>13,769</u>	<u>14,875</u>	<u>28,644</u>
Fund Cash Balances, January 1	<u>23,317</u>	<u>132,963</u>	<u>156,280</u>
Fund Cash Balances, December 31	<u>\$37,086</u>	<u>\$147,838</u>	<u>\$184,924</u>
Reserve for Encumbrances, December 31	<u>\$507</u>	<u>\$2,417</u>	<u>\$2,924</u>

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

GRATIS TOWNSHIP
PREBLE COUNTY

STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS, CASH DISBURSEMENTS, AND
CHANGES IN FUND CASH BALANCE -PRIVATE PURPOSE TRUST
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2007

	<u>Private Purpose Trust</u>
Non-Operating Cash Receipts:	
Earnings on Investments	<u>44</u>
Total Non-Operating Cash Receipts	<u>44</u>
Net Receipts Over Disbursements	44
Fund Cash Balances, January 1	<u>4,619</u>
Fund Cash Balances, December 31	<u><u>\$4,663</u></u>

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

**GRATIS TOWNSHIP
PREBLE COUNTY**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2008 AND 2007**

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

A. Description of the Entity

The constitution and laws of the State of Ohio establish the rights and privileges of Gratis Township, Preble County, Ohio (the Township), as a body corporate and politic. A publicly-elected three-member Board of Trustees directs the Township. The Township provides road and bridge maintenance and cemetery maintenance. The Township contracts with the Village of Gratis to provide fire and ambulance services.

The Township participates in the Ohio Township Association Risk Management Authority public entity risk pool. Note 7 to the financial statements provides information for this entity.

Public Entity Risk Pool:

The Township belongs to the Ohio Township Association Risk Management Authority (OTARMA), a risk-sharing pool available to Ohio Townships. OTARMA provides property and casualty coverage for its members.

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

B. Accounting Basis

These financial statements follow the accounting basis the Auditor of State prescribes or permits. This basis is similar to the cash receipts and disbursements accounting basis. The Township 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 Auditor of State prescribes or permits.

C. Cash and Deposits

The Township values certificates of deposit at cost.

D. Fund Accounting

The Township uses fund accounting to segregate cash and investments that are restricted as to use. The Township classifies its funds into the following types:

1. General Fund

The General Fund reports all financial resources except those required to be accounted for in another fund.

**GRATIS TOWNSHIP
PREBLE COUNTY**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2008 AND 2007
(Continued)**

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

2. Special Revenue Funds

These funds account for proceeds from specific sources (other than from private-purpose trusts or for capital projects) that are restricted to expenditure for specific purposes. The Township had the following significant Special Revenue Funds:

Road and Bridge Fund - This fund receives property tax money for constructing, maintaining, and repairing Township roads and bridges.

Gasoline Tax Fund - This fund receives gasoline tax money to pay for constructing, maintaining, and repairing Township roads.

EMS Fund - This fund receives property tax money to pay for emergency medical services for Township residents.

3. Private Purpose Trust Fund

Fiduciary funds include private purpose trust funds. Trust funds account for assets held under a trust agreement for individuals, private organizations, or other governments which are not available to support the Township's own programs.

The Township's private purpose trust fund is a cemetery bequest fund from which interest earned is used for care of specific grave sites.

E. Budgetary Process

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

1. Appropriations

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

2. 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 also approve estimated resources.

3. Encumbrances

The Ohio Revised Code requires the Township to reserve (encumber) appropriations when individual commitments are made. Encumbrances outstanding at year end are canceled, and reappropriated in the subsequent year. The Township did not encumber all commitments required by Ohio law.

**GRATIS TOWNSHIP
PREBLE COUNTY**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2008 AND 2007
(Continued)**

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

A summary of 2008 and 2007 budgetary activity appears in Note 3.

F. Property, Plant, and Equipment

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

2. Equity in Pooled Cash and Deposits

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

	2008	2007
Demand deposits	\$202,009	\$185,187
Certificates of deposit	4,400	4,400
Total deposits	\$206,409	\$189,587

Deposits: Deposits are insured by the Federal Depository Insurance Corporation or collateralized by the financial institution's public entity deposit pool.

3. Budgetary Activity

Budgetary activity for the years ending December 31, 2008 and 2007 follows:

2008 Budgeted vs. Actual Receipts			
Fund Type	Budgeted Receipts	Actual Receipts	Variance
General	\$50,000	\$63,364	\$13,364
Special Revenue	490,999	501,185	10,186
Trust	159	237	78
Total	\$541,158	\$564,786	\$23,628

2008 Budgeted vs. Actual Budgetary Basis Expenditures			
Fund Type	Appropriation Authority	Budgetary Expenditures	Variance
General	\$70,877	\$54,571	\$16,306
Special Revenue	631,059	495,866	135,193
Trust	200	174	26
Total	\$702,136	\$550,611	\$151,525

**GRATIS TOWNSHIP
PREBLE COUNTY**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2008 AND 2007
(Continued)**

3. Budgetary Activity (Continued)

2007 Budgeted vs. Actual Receipts			
Fund Type	Budgeted Receipts	Actual Receipts	Variance
General	\$52,028	\$71,503	\$19,475
Special Revenue	500,001	489,698	(10,303)
Trust	0	44	44
Total	\$552,029	\$561,245	\$9,216

2007 Budgeted vs. Actual Budgetary Basis Expenditures			
Fund Type	Appropriation Authority	Budgetary Expenditures	Variance
General	\$76,012	\$58,241	\$17,771
Special Revenue	615,798	477,240	138,558
Trust	0	0	0
Total	\$691,810	\$535,481	\$156,329

4. Property Tax

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 homestead and rollback deductions. The financial statements include homestead and rollback 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 Township.

Tangible personal property tax is assessed by the property owners, who must file a list of such property to the County by each April 30.

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

5. Debt

Debt outstanding at December 31, 2008 was as follows:

	Principal	Interest Rate
Backhoe Lease	\$10,316	4.75%
Tractor Lease	42,390	4.50%
Total	\$52,706	

**GRATIS TOWNSHIP
PREBLE COUNTY**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2008 AND 2007
(Continued)**

5. Debt (Continued)

The Township retired the loan on the dump truck in 2008.

The Backhoe Lease is for the lease/purchase of a Case Backhoe. The lease was entered into on May 11, 2004. The original lease/purchase amount was \$54,025 and is being repaid in annual installments of \$10,805. The Township will have an option at the end of the 5 years to purchase the backhoe for \$1.

The Tractor Lease is for the lease/purchase of a Holland Tractor. The lease was entered into on March 1, 2008. The original lease purchase amount was \$42,390 and is being repaid in annual installments of \$15,785. The Township will have an option at the end of the 3 years to purchase the tractor for \$1.

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

Year ending December 31:	Backhoe Lease	Tractor Lease
2009	\$10,805	\$15,785
2010		15,785
2011		15,785
Total	<u>\$10,805</u>	<u>\$47,355</u>

6. Retirement Systems

The Township's 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. For 2008 and 2007, OPERS members contributed 10% and 9.5%, respectively, of their gross salaries and the Township contributed an amount equaling 14% and 13.85% respectively, of participants' gross salaries. The Township has paid all contributions required through December 31, 2008.

7. Risk Management

The Township is exposed to various risks of property and casualty losses, and injuries to employees.

The Township insures against injuries to employees through the Ohio Bureau of Worker's Compensation.

**GRATIS TOWNSHIP
PREBLE COUNTY**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2008 AND 2007
(Continued)**

7. Risk Management (Continued)

The Township belongs to the Ohio Township Association Risk Management Authority (OTARMA), a risk-sharing pool available to Ohio townships. OTARMA provides property and casualty coverage for its members. OTARMA is a member of the American Public Entity Excess Pool (APEEP). Member governments pay annual contributions to fund OTARMA. OTARMA pays judgments, settlements and other expenses resulting from covered claims that exceed the members' deductibles.

Casualty Coverage

For an occurrence prior to January 1, 2006, OTARMA retains casualty risks up to \$250,000 per occurrence, including claim adjustment expenses. OTARMA pays a percentage of its contributions to APEEP. APEEP reinsures claims exceeding \$250,000, up to \$1,750,000 per claim and \$10,000,000 in the aggregate per year. For an occurrence on or subsequent to January 1, 2006, the Pool retains casualty risk up to \$350,000 per occurrence. Claims exceeding \$350,000 are reinsured with APEEP in an amount not to exceed \$2,650,000 for each claim and \$10,000,000 in the aggregate per year. Governments can elect up to \$10,000,000 in additional coverage with the General Reinsurance Corporation, through contracts with OTARMA.

If losses exhaust PEP's retained earnings, APEEP provides *excess of funds available* coverage up to \$5,000,000 per year, subject to a per-claim limit of \$2,000,000 (prior to January 1, 2006) or \$3,000,000 (on or subsequent to January 1, 2006).

Property Coverage

Through 2004, OTARMA retained property risks, including automobile physical damage, up to \$100,000 on any specific loss in any one occurrence. The Travelers Indemnity Company reinsured losses exceeding \$100,000 up to \$500 million per occurrence.

Beginning in 2005, Travelers reinsures specific losses exceeding \$250,000 up to \$600 million per occurrence. This amount increased to \$300,000 in 2007. For 2007, APEEP reinsures members for specific losses exceeding \$100,000 up to \$300,000 per occurrence, subject to an annual aggregate loss payment. Travelers provides aggregate stop-loss coverage based upon the combined members' total insurable values. If the stop loss is reached by payment of losses between \$100,000 and \$250,000 in 2006, or \$100,000 and \$300,000 in 2007, Travelers will reinsure specific losses exceeding \$100,000 up to their \$600 million per occurrence limit. The aggregate stop-loss limit for 2007 was \$2,014,548.

The aforementioned casualty and property reinsurance agreements do not discharge OTARMA's primary liability for claims payments on covered losses. Claims exceeding coverage limits are the obligation of the respective government.

Property and casualty settlements did not exceed insurance coverage for the past three fiscal years.

**GRATIS TOWNSHIP
PREBLE COUNTY**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2008 AND 2007
(Continued)**

7. Risk Management (Continued)

Financial Position

OTARMA's financial statements (audited by other accountants) conform with generally accepted accounting principles, and reported the following assets, liabilities and retained earnings at December 31, 2007 and 2006 (the latest information available):

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
Assets	\$43,210,703	\$42,042,275
Liabilities	<u>(13,357,837)</u>	<u>(12,120,661)</u>
Net Assets	<u>\$29,852,866</u>	<u>\$29,921,614</u>

At December 31, 2007 and 2006, respectively, liabilities above include approximately \$12.5 million and \$11.3 million of estimated incurred claims payable. The assets and retained earnings above also include approximately \$11.6 million and \$10.8 million of unpaid claims to be billed to approximately 950 member governments in the future, as of December 31, 2007 and 2006, respectively. These amounts will be included in future contributions from members when the related claims are due for payment. The Township's share of these unpaid claims collectible in future years is approximately \$4,700. This payable includes the subsequent year's contribution due if the Township terminates participation, as described in the last paragraph below.

Based on discussions with OTARMA, the expected rates OTARMA charges to compute member contributions, which are used to pay claims as they become due, are not expected to change significantly from those used to determine the historical contributions detailed below. By contract, the annual liability of each member is limited to the amount of financial contributions required to be made to OTARMA for each year of membership.

<u>Contributions to OTARMA</u>	
2005	\$6,042
2006	\$5,083
2007	\$4,998

After completing one year of membership, members may withdraw on each anniversary of the date they joined OTARMA provided they provide written notice to OTARMA 60 days in advance of the anniversary date. Upon withdrawal, members are eligible for a full or partial refund of their capital contributions, minus the subsequent year's budgetary contribution. Withdrawing members have no other future obligation to the pool. Also upon withdrawal, payments for all casualty claims and claim expenses become the sole responsibility of the withdrawing member, regardless of whether a claim occurred or was reported prior to the withdrawal.

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Mary Taylor, CPA

Auditor of State

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

Gratis Township
Preble County
P.O. Box 24
West Elkton, Ohio 45070

To the Board of Trustees:

We have audited the financial statements of Gratis Township, Preble County, Ohio (the Township), as of and for the years ended December 31, 2008 and 2007, and have issued our report thereon dated September 2, 2009, wherein we noted the Township prepared its financial statements using accounting practices the Auditor of State prescribes or permits rather than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. We also noted the Township uses the Auditor of State's Uniform Accounting Network (UAN) to process its financial transactions. *Government Auditing Standards* considers this service to impair the Auditor of State's independence to audit the Township. However, *Government Auditing Standards* permits the Auditor of State to audit and opine on this entity, because Ohio Revised Code § 117.101 requires the Auditor of State to provide UAN services, and Ohio Revised Code §§ 117.11(B) and 115.56 mandate the Auditor of State to audit Ohio governments. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in the Comptroller General of the United States' *Government Auditing Standards*.

Internal Control over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit, we considered the Township's internal control over financial reporting as a basis for designing our audit procedures for expressing our opinion on the financial statements, but not to opine on the effectiveness of the Township's internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, we have not opined on the effectiveness of the Township's internal control over financial reporting.

Our consideration of internal control over financial reporting was for the limited purpose described in the preceding paragraph and would not necessarily identify all deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting that might be significant deficiencies or material weaknesses. However, as discussed below, we identified certain deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting that we consider significant deficiencies.

A control deficiency exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in performing their assigned functions, to prevent or detect misstatements on a timely basis. A significant deficiency is a control deficiency, or combination of control deficiencies, that adversely affects the Township's ability to initiate, authorize, record, process, or report financial data reliably in accordance with its applicable accounting basis, such that there is more than a remote likelihood that the Township's internal control will not prevent or detect a more-than-inconsequential financial statement misstatement.

We consider findings 2008-002 and 2008-003 described in the accompanying schedule of findings to be significant deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting.

A material weakness is a significant deficiency, or combination of significant deficiencies resulting in more than a remote likelihood that the Township's internal control will not prevent or detect a material financial statement misstatement.

Our consideration of the internal control over financial reporting was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and would not necessarily identify all deficiencies in the internal control that might be significant deficiencies and accordingly, would not necessarily disclose all significant deficiencies that are also material weaknesses. We believe findings number 2008-002 and 2008-003 are also material weaknesses.

We also noted certain internal control matters that we reported to the Township's management in a separate letter dated September 2, 2009.

Compliance and Other Matters

As part of reasonably assuring whether the Township's financial statements are free of material misstatement, we tested its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could directly and materially affect the determination of financial statement amounts. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit and accordingly, we do not express an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed an instance of noncompliance or other matter that we must report under *Government Auditing Standards* which is described in the accompanying schedule of findings as item 2008-001.

We also noted certain noncompliance or other matters not requiring inclusion in this report that we reported to the Township's management in a separate letter dated September 2, 2009.



Mary Taylor, CPA
Auditor of State

September 2, 2009

GRATIS TOWNSHIP
PREBLE COUNTY

SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS
DECEMBER 31, 2008 AND 2007

FINDINGS RELATED TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
REQUIRED TO BE REPORTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GAGAS

FINDING NUMBER 2008-001

Noncompliance

Ohio Revised Code, Section 5705.41(D)(1), prohibits a subdivision or taxing entity from making any contract or ordering any expenditure of money unless a certificate signed by the fiscal officer is attached thereto. The fiscal officer must certify that the amount required to meet any such contract or expenditure has been lawfully appropriated and is in the treasury, or is in the process of collection to the credit of an appropriate fund free from any previous encumbrance.

There are several exceptions to the standard requirement stated above that a fiscal officer's certificate must be obtained prior to a subdivision or taxing authority entering into a contract or order involving the expenditure of money. The main exceptions are: "then and now" certificates, blanket certificates, and super blanket certificates, which are provided for in sections 5705.41(D)(1) and 5705.41(D)(3), respectively, of the Ohio Revised Code.

1. "Then and Now" Certificate – If the fiscal officer can certify that both at the time that the contract or order was made ("then"), and at the time that the fiscal officer is completing the certification ("now"), that sufficient funds were available or in the process of collection, to the credit of a proper fund, properly appropriated and free from any previous encumbrance, the Township can authorize the drawing of a warrant for the payment of the amount due. The Township has thirty days from the receipt of the "then and now" certificate to approve payment by ordinance or resolution.

Amounts of less than \$3,000 may be paid by the fiscal officer without a resolution or ordinance upon completion of the "then and now" certificate, provided that the expenditure is otherwise lawful. This does not eliminate any otherwise applicable requirement for approval of expenditures by the Township.

2. Blanket Certificate – Fiscal officers may prepare "blanket" certificates for a certain sum of money not in excess of an amount established by resolution or ordinance adopted by a majority of the members of the legislative authority against any specific line item account over a period not running beyond the end of the current fiscal year. The blanket certificates may, but need not, be limited to a specific vendor. Only one blanket certificate may be outstanding at one particular time for any one particular line item appropriation.
3. Super Blanket Certificate – The Township may also make expenditures and contracts for any amount from a specific line-item appropriation account in a specified fund upon certification of the fiscal officer for most professional services, fuel, oil, food items, and any other specific recurring and reasonably predictable operating expense. This certification is not to extend beyond the current year.

More than one super blanket certificate may be outstanding at a particular time for any line item appropriation.

**FINDING NUMBER 2008-001
(Continued)**

The Township did utilize Blanket Certificates and Then & Now Certificates. However, 40% of the transactions tested in 2007 and 7% of transactions tested in 2008 were not certified by the fiscal officer at the time the commitment was incurred. We were unable to determine if one additional item was encumbered properly because we were unable to determine the invoice date. Failure to properly certify the availability of funds can result in overspending funds and negative cash fund balances.

Unless the exceptions noted above are used, prior certification is not only required by statute but is a key control in the disbursement process to assure that purchase commitments receive prior approval. To improve controls over disbursements and to help reduce the possibility of the Township's funds exceeding budgetary spending limitations, we recommend that the fiscal officer certify that the funds are or will be available prior to obligation by the Township. When prior certification is not possible, "then and now" certification should be used. Invoices lacking a date should be dated by the Fiscal Officer when received.

We recommend the Township certify purchases to which section 5705.41(D) applies. The most convenient certification method is to use purchase orders that include the certification language 5705.41(D) requires to authorize disbursements. The fiscal officer should sign the certification at the time the Township incurs a commitment, and only when the requirements of 5705.41(D) are satisfied. The fiscal officer should post approved purchase commitments to the proper appropriation code, to reduce the available appropriation.

Officials' Response:

The Township did not provide a response to this finding.

FINDING NUMBER 2008-002

Material Weakness

When designing the public office's system of internal control and the specific control activities, management should consider ensuring that all transactions are properly authorized in accordance with management's policies, ensuring that accounting records are properly designed, and verifying the existence and valuation of assets and liabilities and periodically reconcile them to the accounting records.

The Township lacked management oversight in the posting of receipts. This lack of oversight is illustrated by the following:

- In 2007, the Fiscal Officer posted \$5,405 to Public Works instead of Debt Service in the General Fund and \$5,400 to the Road and Bridge for the payment on the backhoe.
- In 2007, the Fiscal Officer posted \$34,043 received from the Village of Gratis to Licenses, Permits, and Fees instead of Charges for Services within the Fire, Rescue, Ambulance and EMS Service Fund.

The Township made adjustments to the accompanying financial statements for the above items.

The lack of proper management oversight could result in material misstatement of revenue. We recommend the Township use due care in posting receipt and disbursement transactions to the Township's books.

**FINDING NUMBER 2008-002
(Continued)**

Officials' Response:

The Township did not provide a response to this finding.

FINDING NUMBER 2008-003

Material Weakness

When designing the public office's system of internal control and the specific control activities, management should consider ensuring that accounting records are properly designed, verifying the existence and valuation of assets and liabilities and periodically reconcile them to the accounting records, and performing analytical procedures to determine the reasonableness of financial data.

The Township lacks management oversight in the posting of appropriations. General Fund appropriations for 2007 were not posted properly to the accounting system. The UAN accounting system showed \$64,411 and the appropriation resolution plus one amendment was \$75,523 for a difference of \$11,112. Also, in 2008, the Cemetery Fund appropriations in the UAN system did not match the approved appropriations because there was a \$6,000 supplemental appropriation entered into the UAN system that was not approved by the Board of Trustees.

Failure to properly post appropriations could result in excessive spending and possible negative fund balances. We recommend the Township properly post appropriations to the UAN system. Once posted, the Fiscal Officer and Trustees should compare the appropriations on the UAN system to the official documents. The Trustees should approve all amendments to appropriations in the minutes. The Township should maintain detail information supporting all supplemental appropriations.

Officials' Response:

The Township did not provide a response to this finding.

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**GRATIS TOWNSHIP
PREBLE COUNTY**

**SCHEDULE OF PRIOR AUDIT FINDINGS
DECEMBER 31, 2008 AND 2007**

Finding Number	Finding Summary	Fully Corrected?	Not Corrected, Partially Corrected; Significantly Different Corrective Action Taken; or Finding No Longer Valid; <i>Explain</i>
2006-001	Ohio Revised Code Section 5705.41(D), failure to certify purchases.	No	Not corrected. Reissued as Finding Number 2008-001
2006-002	Improperly posting various receipts and disbursements.	No	Not corrected. Reissued as Finding 2008-002 and in management letter.
2006-003	Improperly classifying the Cemetery Bequest Fund as a Special Revenue Fund.	Yes	

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Mary Taylor, CPA
Auditor of State

GRATIS TOWNSHIP

PREBLE COUNTY

CLERK'S CERTIFICATION

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

Susan Babbitt

CLERK OF THE BUREAU

**CERTIFIED
SEPTEMBER 29, 2009**