



OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE
KEITH FABER



OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE KEITH FABER



88 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
ContactUs@ohioauditor.gov
(800) 282-0370

INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT ON APPLYING AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES

Southwest Council of Government
Cuyahoga County
16099 Foltz Parkway
Strongsville, Ohio 44149

We have performed the procedures enumerated below on the Southwest Council of Government's (the Council) receipts, disbursements and balances recorded in the cash basis accounting records for the years ended December 31, 2021 and 2020 and certain compliance requirements related to those transactions and balances, included in the information provided to us by the management of the Council. The Council is responsible for the receipts, disbursements and balances recorded in the cash basis accounting records for the years ended December 31, 2021 and 2020 and certain compliance requirements related to these transactions and balances included in the information provided to us by the Council.

The Council Board and the management of the Council have agreed to and acknowledged that the procedures performed are appropriate to meet the intended purpose of providing assistance in the evaluation of the Council's receipts, disbursements and balances recorded in their cash-basis accounting records for the years ended December 31, 2021 and 2020, and certain compliance requirements related to these transactions and balances. No other party acknowledged the appropriateness of the procedures. This report may not be suitable for any other purpose. The procedures performed may not address all the items of interest to a user of the report and may not meet the needs of all users of the report and, as such, users are responsible for determining whether the procedures performed are appropriate for their purposes. The sufficiency of the procedures is solely the responsibility of the parties specified in the report. Consequently, we make no representation regarding the sufficiency of the procedures described below either for the purpose for which this report has been requested or for any other purpose.

For the purposes of performing these procedures, this report only describes exceptions exceeding \$10.

The procedures and the associated findings are as follows:

Cash

1. We recalculated the December 31, 2021 and December 31, 2020 bank reconciliations. We found no exceptions.
2. We agreed the January 1, 2020 beginning fund balances recorded in the General Ledger Report to the December 31, 2019 balances in the prior year documentation in the prior year Agreed-Upon Procedures working papers. We found no exceptions. We also agreed the January 1, 2021 beginning fund balances recorded in the General Ledger Report to the December 31, 2020 balances in the General Ledger Report. We found no exceptions.
3. We agreed the 2021 and 2020 bank reconciliation as of December 31, 2021 and 2020 to the total fund cash balances reported in the General Ledger Report and the financial statements filed by the Council in the Hinkle System. The amounts agreed.

4. We confirmed the December 31, 2021 bank account balance with the Council of Government's financial institution. We found no exceptions. We also agreed the confirmed balances to the amounts appearing in the December 31, 2021 bank reconciliation without exception.
5. We selected five reconciling debits (such as outstanding checks) from the December 31, 2021 bank reconciliation:
 - a. We traced each debit to the subsequent January bank statement. We found no exceptions.
 - b. We traced the amounts and dates to the check register, and determined the debits were dated prior to December 31. We found no exceptions.

Member Contributions

We selected five member contribution cash receipts from the year ended December 31, 2021 and five member contribution cash receipts from the year ended 2020 recorded in the duplicate cash receipts book and:

- a. Agreed the receipt amount to the amount recorded in the General Ledger Report. The amounts agreed.
- b. Agreed the amount charged complied with rates in force during the period. We found no exceptions.
- c. Inspected the General Ledger Report to determine the receipt was posted to the proper fund, and was recorded in the proper year. We found no exceptions.

Debt

1. The prior agreed-upon procedures documentation disclosed debt outstanding as of December 31, 2019.
2. We inquired of management and inspected the General Ledger Report for evidence of debt issued during 2021 or 2020 or debt payment activity during 2021 or 2020. New debt, consisting of a lease-purchase agreement, and debt payment activity during 2021 and 2020 were found.

The Council did not provide the legal authority, the Council relied on, to enter into the lease-purchase agreement.

Payroll Cash Disbursements

1. We selected one payroll check for the only employee from 2021 and one payroll check for the only employee from 2020 from the General Ledger Report and:
 - a. We compared the hours and pay rate, or salary recorded in the Payroll Expenditures Report to supporting documentation (timecard, legislatively or statutorily-approved rate or salary).
 - i. We inspected both the employees' personnel files and minute record for the Retirement system, Federal, State & Local income tax withholding authorization.
 - ii. We agreed these items to the information used to compute gross and net pay related to this check.
We found no exceptions.
 - b. We recomputed gross and net pay and agreed it to the amount recorded in the payroll register. We found no exceptions.
 - c. We inspected the fund and account codes to which the check was posted to determine the posting was allowable based on the employees' duties as documented in the employees' personnel files and minute record. We found no exceptions.
 - d. We confirmed the payment was posted to the proper year. We found no exceptions.

2. We inspected the last remittance of tax and retirement withholdings for the year ended December 31, 2021 to confirm remittances were timely paid, and if the amounts paid agreed to the amounts withheld, plus the employer's share where applicable, during the final withholding period of 2021. We observed the following:

Withholding (plus employer share, where applicable)	Date Due	Date Paid	Amount Due	Amount Paid
Federal income taxes & Medicare (and social security, for employees not enrolled in pension system)	January 31, 2022	February 18, 2022	\$895	\$895
State income taxes	January 15, 2022	November 30, 2021	\$75	\$75
Local income tax	January 15, 2022	December 2, 2021	\$200	\$200
OPERS retirement	January 31, 2022	December 21, 2021	\$2,400	\$2,400

As stated above, the Council of Governments paid the December 2021 Federal income taxes on February 18, 2022 after the due date of January 31, 2022.

Non-Payroll Cash Disbursements

1. We selected 10 disbursements from the General Ledger Report for the year ended December 31, 2021 and 10 from the year ended 2020 and determined whether:
 - a. The disbursements were for a proper public purpose. We found no exceptions.
 - b. The check number, date, payee name and amount recorded on the returned, canceled check agreed to the check number, date, payee name and amount recorded in the General Ledger Report and to the names and amounts on the supporting invoices. We found no exceptions.
 - c. The payment was posted to a fund consistent with the restricted purpose for which the fund's cash can be used. We found no exceptions.

Sunshine Law Compliance

1. We obtained and inspected the Council's Public Records Policy to determine the policy was in accordance with Ohio Rev. Code §§ 149.43(E)(2) and 149.43(B)(7)(c) and did not limit the number of responses that may be made to a particular person, limit the number of responses during a specified period of time, or establish a fixed period of time before it will respond unless that period is less than eight hours. We found no exceptions.
2.
 - a. We inquired with Council management and determined that the Council did not have any completed public records requests during the engagement period.
 - b. The Council did not have any denied public records requests during the engagement period.
 - c. The Council did not have any public records requests with redactions during the engagement period.
3. We inquired whether the Council had a records retention schedule, and observed that it was readily available to the public as required by Ohio Rev. Code § 149.43(B)(2). We found no exceptions.
4. We inspected whether written evidence exists that the Public Records Policy was provided to the records custodian/manager as required by Ohio Rev. Code § 149.43(E)(2). We noted that the Council did not have written evidence.

5. We inquired with Council management and determined that the Council did not have a policy manual during the engagement period therefore the public records policy could not be included as required by Ohio Rev. Code § 149.43(E)(2).
6. We observed whether the Council's poster describing their Public Records Policy was displayed conspicuously in all branches of the Council as required by Ohio Rev. Code § 149.43(E)(2). We noted that the Council did not have the public records policy posted.
7. We inquired with Council management and determined that the Council did not have any applications for record disposal submitted to the Records Commission during the engagement period.
8. We inquired with Council management and determined that the Council did not have any elected officials subject to the Public Records Training requirements during the engagement period as required by Ohio Rev. Code §§ 149.43(E)(1) and 109.43(B).
9. We inspected the public notices for the public meetings held during the engagement period and determined the Council notified the general public and news media of when and where meetings during the engagement period were to be held as required by Ohio Rev. Code § 121.22(F). We found no exceptions.
10. We inspected the minutes of public meetings during the engagement period in accordance with Ohio Rev. Code § 121.22(C) and determined whether they were:
 - a. Prepared – a file is created following the date of the meeting
 - b. Filed – placed with similar documents in an organized manner
 - c. Maintained - retained, at a minimum, for the engagement period
 - d. Open to public inspection – available for public viewing or request.We found no exceptions.
11. We inspected the minutes from the engagement period in accordance with Ohio Rev. Code § 121.22(G) and determined the board did not have executive sessions during the Agreed Upon Procedures period.
We found no exceptions.

Other Compliance

1. Ohio Rev. Code § 117.38 requires councils to file their financial information in the HINKLE system within 60 days after the close of the fiscal year. This statute also permits the Auditor of State to extend the deadline for filing a financial report and establish terms and conditions for any such extension. Auditor of State established policies, regarding the filing of complete financial statements, as defined in AOS Bulletin 2015-007 in the Hinkle System. We confirmed the Council filed their complete financial statements, as defined by AOS Bulletin 2015-007 and Auditor of State established policy within the allotted timeframe for the years ended December 31, 2021 and 2020 in the Hinkle system. We found no exceptions.
2. We inspected the Auditor of State's listing of registered Council of Governments to determine if the Council had completed the registration process with the Auditor of State as required. We found no exceptions.

We were engaged by the Council to perform this agreed-upon procedures engagement and conducted our engagement in accordance with the attestation standards established by the AICPA and the Comptroller General of the United States' *Government Auditing Standards*. We were not engaged to, and did not conduct an examination or review engagement, the objective of which would be the expression of an opinion or conclusion, respectively, on the Council of Government's receipts, disbursements, balances and compliance with certain laws and regulations. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion or conclusion. Had we performed additional procedures, other matters might have come to our attention that would have been reported to you.

We are required to be independent of the Council and to meet our ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the ethical requirements established by the Comptroller General of the United States' *Government Auditing Standards* related to our agreed upon procedures engagement.



Keith Faber
Auditor of State
Columbus, Ohio

March 18, 2024

OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE KEITH FABER



SOUTHWEST COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

CUYAHOGA 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 3/28/2024

88 East Broad 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