



PERRY

& Associates CPAs

PASSION *Beyond the Numbers*

**EAST GEAUGA FIRE DISTRICT
GEAUGA COUNTY**

**REGULAR AUDIT
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023 - 2022**



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

Board of Trustees
East Geauga Fire District
PO Box 1197
Middlefield, OH 44062

We have reviewed the *Independent Auditor's Report* of the East Geauga Fire District, Geauga 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 East Geauga 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

November 12, 2024

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**EAST GEAUGA FIRE DISTRICT
GEAUGA COUNTY**

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

East Geauga Fire District
Geauga County
PO Box 1197
Middlefield, Ohio 44062

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 East Geauga Fire District, Geauga 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.
- 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 19, 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 & Associates
Certified Public Accountants, A.C.
Marietta, Ohio

September 19, 2024

**EAST GEAUGA FIRE DISTRICT
GEAUGA COUNTY**

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

	<u>General Fund</u>
Cash Receipts:	
Property Taxes	\$ 651,089
Intergovernmental	34,453
Earnings on Investment	<u>13,323</u>
<i>Total Cash Receipts</i>	<u>698,865</u>
Cash Disbursements	
Current Disbursements:	
General Government	857,664
Insurance	<u>798</u>
<i>Total Cash Disbursements</i>	<u>858,462</u>
<i>Net Change in Fund Cash Balance</i>	<u>\$ (159,597)</u>
<i>Fund Cash Balances, January 1</i>	<u>579,206</u>
Fund Cash Balances, December 31	<u><u>\$ 419,609</u></u>

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

East Geauga Fire District
Gauga 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 East Geauga Fire District, Gauga 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 Middlefield Village and Middlefield Township. 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 which is 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.

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 (D). 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 (D) 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, function, or object 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.

East Geauga Fire District
Gauga County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

Note 2 – Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

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. The District did not use the encumbrance method of accounting.

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.

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 7.

East Geauga Fire District
Geauga County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

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	\$ 664,408	\$ 698,865	\$ 34,457
Total	\$ 664,408	\$ 698,865	\$ 34,457

2023 Budgeted vs. Actual Budgetary Basis Expenditures			
Fund Type	Appropriation Authority	Budgetary Expenditures	Variance
General	\$ 861,355	\$ 858,462	\$ 2,893
Total	\$ 861,355	\$ 858,462	\$ 2,893

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	\$419,609

Deposits

Deposits are 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.

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.

East Geauga Fire District
Geauga County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2023

Note 5 – Taxes (Continued)

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

Commercial Insurance

The District has obtained commercial insurance for the following risks:

- Comprehensive property and general liability;
- Errors and omissions.

Note 7 – Fund Balances

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 facilities effective cash planning and control. There were no encumbrances at year end.

Note 8 – 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 ended in April 2023. During 2023, the Fire District received no COVID-19 funding.

**EAST GEAUGA FIRE DISTRICT
GEAUGA COUNTY**

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

	<u>General Fund</u>
Cash Receipts:	
Property Taxes	\$ 670,513
Intergovernmental	37,284
Earnings on Investment	<u>600</u>
<i>Total Cash Receipts</i>	<u>708,397</u>
Cash Disbursements	
Current Disbursements:	
General Government	687,792
Insurance	<u>775</u>
<i>Total Cash Disbursements</i>	<u>688,567</u>
<i>Net Change in Fund Cash Balance</i>	<u>\$ 19,830</u>
<i>Fund Cash Balances, January 1</i>	<u>559,377</u>
Fund Cash Balances, December 31	<u><u>\$ 579,206</u></u>

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

East Geauga Fire District
Geauga 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 East Geauga Fire District, Geauga County, (the District) as a body corporate and politic. A two-member Board of Trustees governs the District. Each political subdivision within the District appoints one member. Those subdivisions are Middlefield Village and Middlefield Township. 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 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.

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 (D). 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 (D) 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, function, or object 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.

East Geauga Fire District
Gauga County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

Note 2 – Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

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. The District did not use the encumbrance method of accounting.

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.

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 7.

East Geauga Fire District
Gauga County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

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	\$ 686,543	\$ 708,397	\$ 21,854
Total	\$ 686,543	\$ 708,397	\$ 21,854

2022 Budgeted vs. Actual Budgetary Basis Expenditures			
Fund Type	Appropriation Receipts	Budgetary Receipts	Variance
General	\$ 688,828	\$ 688,567	\$ 261
Total	\$ 688,828	\$ 688,567	\$ 261

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:

	2022
Demand Deposits	\$ 579,206

Deposits

Deposits are 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.

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.

East Geauga Fire District
Geauga County
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

Note 5 – Taxes (Continued)

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

Commercial Insurance

The District has obtained commercial insurance for the following risks:

- Comprehensive property and general liability;
- Errors and omissions.

Note 7 – Fund Balances

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 facilities effective cash planning and control. There were no encumbrances at year end.

In the general fund, outstanding encumbrances are considered assigned.

Note 8 – 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 Fire District received no COVID-19 funding.

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

East Geauga Fire District
Geauga County
PO Box 1197
Middlefield, Ohio 44062

To the Board of Trustees:

We have audited, in accordance with 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 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 of the East Geauga Fire District, Geauga County (the District) and have issued our report thereon dated September 19, 2024, wherein we noted the District followed financial reporting provisions Ohio Rev. Code § 117.38 and Ohio Admin. Code 117-2-03(C) permit.

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 opinions 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 Entity'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 an instance of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards* and which is described in the accompanying schedule of findings as item 2023-001

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.



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

September 19, 2024

**EAST GEAUGA FIRE DISTRICT
GEAUGA COUNTY**

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

FINDINGS RELATED TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS REQUIRED TO BE REPORTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GAGAS
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FINDING NUMBER 2023-001

Noncompliance

Ohio Revised Code Section 5705.41(D) requires that no subdivision or taxing unit shall make any contract or give any order involving the expenditure of money unless a certificate signed by the Treasurer is attached thereto. The Treasurer must certify that the amount required meeting 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. Only the subdivision's Treasurer needs to sign the certificate. Every contract made without such a certificate shall be void, and no warrant shall be issued in payment of any amount due thereon.

There are several exceptions to the standard requirement stated above that a Treasurer'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 Treasurer can certify that both at the time that the contract or order was made ("then"), and at the time that the Treasurer 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 taxing authority can authorize the drawing of a warrant for the payment of the amount due. The taxing authority 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 Treasurer 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 taxing authority.
2. Blanket Certificate – Treasurers 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 entity may also make expenditures and contracts for any amount from a specific line-item appropriation account in a specified fund upon certification of the Treasurer 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. Only one super blanket certificate may be outstanding at a particular time for any one line-item appropriation.

The District did not properly certify expenditures during 2022 and 2023.

**EAST GEAUGA FIRE DISTRICT
GEAUGA COUNTY**

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

**FINDINGS RELATED TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
REQUIRED TO BE REPORTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GAGAS (Continued)**

To improve controls over disbursements and to help reduce the possibility of the District's funds exceeding budgetary spending limitations, we recommend that the Treasurer certify that the funds are or will be available prior to an obligation being incurred by the District. There should be a system developed to track purchase orders issued (should blanket and super blanket purchase orders be issued) and incorporate the purchase order commitments into the budgetary tracking process of the District. Also the purchase order should have the fund, function, object the disbursement will be posted to, as this is the District's legal level of control.

Officials' Response – We did not receive a response from officials.

OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE KEITH FABER



EAST GEAUGA FIRE DISTRICT

GEAUGA 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 11/26/2024

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