

**HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP
MERCER COUNTY
Regular Audit
December 31, 2005 and 2004**



**Auditor of State
Betty Montgomery**

Board of Trustees
Hopewell Township
3419 Fetters Road
Rockford, Ohio 45882

We have reviewed the *Independent Accountants' Report* of Hopewell Township, Mercer County, prepared by Perry and Associates, Certified Public Accountants, A.C., for the audit period January 1, 2004 through December 31, 2005. 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.

The financial statements in the attached report are presented in accordance with a regulatory basis of accounting prescribed or permitted by the Auditor of State. Due to a February 2, 2005 interpretation from the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA), modifications were required to the *Independent Accountants' Report* on your financial statements. While the Auditor of State 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. The attached report includes an opinion relating to GAAP presentation and measurement requirements, but does not imply the statements are misstated under the non-GAAP regulatory basis. The *Independent Accountants' Report* also includes an opinion on the financial statements using the regulatory format the Auditor of State permits.

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. Hopewell Township is responsible for compliance with these laws and regulations.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Betty Montgomery".

BETTY MONTGOMERY
Auditor of State

September 5, 2006

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**HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP
MERCER COUNTY**

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Perry & Associates
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INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REPORT

July 18, 2006

Hopewell Township
Mercer County
3419 Feters Road
Rockford, OH 44882

To the Board of Trustees:

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Hopewell Township, Mercer County, Ohio, (the Township) as of and for the years ended December 31, 2005 and 2004. 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. 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.

Revisions to GAAP would require the Township to reformat its financial statement presentation and make other changes effective for the years ended December 31, 2005 and 2004. Instead of the combined funds the accompanying financial statements present for 2005 and 2004, the revisions require presenting entity wide statements and also to present it's larger (i.e. major) funds separately beginning in 2004. 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 the new GAAP presentation requirements. The Auditor of State permits, but does not require governments to reformat their statements. The Township has elected not to reformat its statements. Since the Township does not use GAAP to measure financial statement amounts, 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, 2005 and 2004 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, 2005 and 2004 or their changes in financial position for the year then ended.

Also, in our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the combined fund cash balances of Hopewell Township, Mercer County, as of December 31, 2005 and 2004, and its combined cash receipts and disbursements for the years then ended on the accounting basis Note 1 describes.

The aforementioned revision to generally accepted accounting principles also requires the Township to include Management's Discussion and Analysis for the years ended December 31, 2005 and 2004. The Government 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 July 18, 2006, 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.

Respectfully Submitted,

Perry and Associates
Certified Public Accountants, A.C.

**HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP
MERCER COUNTY**

**COMBINED STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS, CASH DISBURSEMENTS, AND
CHANGES IN FUND CASH BALANCES
ALL GOVERNMENTAL FUND TYPES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2005**

	<u>Governmental Fund Types</u>		Totals (Memorandum Only)
	<u>General</u>	<u>Special Revenue</u>	
Cash Receipts:			
Local Taxes	\$ 13,239	\$ 39,716	\$ 52,955
Intergovernmental	13,652	99,704	113,356
Licenses, Permits, and Fees	105		105
Earnings on Investments	118	186	304
Other Revenue	59		59
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Cash Receipts	27,173	139,606	166,779
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Cash Disbursements:			
Current:			
General Government	23,224		23,224
Public Safety	556	32,033	32,589
Public Works		97,482	97,482
Health	8,660		8,660
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Cash Disbursements	32,440	129,515	161,955
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Cash Receipts Over/(Under) Cash Disbursements	(5,267)	10,091	4,824
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Other Financing Receipts/(Disbursements):			
Other Sources	0	380	380
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Other Financing Receipts/(Disbursements)	0	380	380
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Excess of Cash Receipts and Other Financing Receipts Over/(Under) Cash Disbursements and Other Financing Disbursements	(5,267)	10,471	5,204
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Fund Cash Balances, January 1	20,510	83,253	103,763
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Fund Cash Balances, December 31	\$ 15,243	\$ 93,724	\$ 108,967
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The notes to the financial statements are an integral part of the financial statements

**HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP
MERCER COUNTY**

**COMBINED STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS, CASH DISBURSEMENTS, AND
CHANGES IN FUND CASH BALANCES
ALL GOVERNMENTAL FUND TYPES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2004**

	<u>Governmental Fund Types</u>		<u>Totals (Memorandum Only)</u>
	<u>General</u>	<u>Special Revenue</u>	
Cash Receipts:			
Local Taxes	\$ 13,189	\$ 38,341	\$ 51,530
Intergovernmental	27,364	93,830	121,194
Licenses, Permits, and Fees	285		285
Earnings on Investments	71	117	188
	<u>40,909</u>	<u>132,288</u>	<u>173,197</u>
Cash Disbursements:			
Current:			
General Government	26,320		26,320
Public Safety	68	32,255	32,323
Public Works		85,049	85,049
Health	6,795	847	7,642
	<u>33,183</u>	<u>118,151</u>	<u>151,334</u>
Total Cash Disbursements	<u>33,183</u>	<u>118,151</u>	<u>151,334</u>
Total Cash Receipts Over/(Under) Cash Disbursements	<u>7,726</u>	<u>14,137</u>	<u>21,863</u>
Other Financing Receipts/(Disbursements):			
Other Sources		400	400
	<u>0</u>	<u>400</u>	<u>400</u>
Total Other Financing Receipts/(Disbursements)	<u>0</u>	<u>400</u>	<u>400</u>
Excess of Cash Receipts and Other Financing Receipts Over/(Under) Cash Disbursements and Other Financing Disbursements	7,726	14,537	22,263
Fund Cash Balances, January 1	<u>12,784</u>	<u>68,716</u>	<u>81,500</u>
Fund Cash Balances, December 31	<u>\$ 20,510</u>	<u>\$ 83,253</u>	<u>\$ 103,763</u>

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

**HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP
MERCER COUNTY**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2005 AND 2004**

1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

A. Description of the Entity

Hopewell Township, Mercer County, (the Township) is a body corporate and politic established to exercise the rights and privileges conveyed to it by the constitution and laws of the State of Ohio. The Township is directed by a publicly-elected three-member Board of Trustees. The Township provides general governmental services, including road and bridge maintenance, cemetery maintenance, fire protection and emergence medical services. The Township contracts with the Rockford Community Fire Company and the City of Celina to provide fire services and Mercer County Emergency Medical Services to provide ambulance services.

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

B. Basis of Accounting

These financial statements follow the basis of accounting prescribed or permitted by the Auditor of State, which is similar to the cash receipts and disbursements basis of accounting. Receipts are recognized when received in cash rather than when earned, and disbursements are recognized 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 prescribed or permitted by the Auditor of State.

C. Cash and Investments

The Township Clerk invests all available funds of the Township in an interest-bearing checking account.

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 is the general operating fund. It is used to account for all financial resources except those required to be accounted for in another fund.

2. Special Revenue Funds

These funds are used to account for proceeds from specific sources that are restricted to expenditure for specific purposes. The Township has the following significant Special Revenue Funds:

**HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP
MERCER COUNTY**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2005 AND 2004
(Continued)**

1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

D. Fund Accounting (Continued)

2. Special Revenue Funds (Continued)

Motor Vehicle License Tax Fund - This fund receives tax money from motor vehicle licenses for constructing, maintaining and repairing Township roads.

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

Fire District Fund – This fund receives tax levy monies to pay for fire services.

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 fund, function, and 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 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 commitments are made. Encumbrances outstanding at year end are carried over, and need not be reappropriated in the subsequent year.

A summary of 2005 and 2004 budgetary activity appears in Note 3.

F. Property, Plant and Equipment

Acquisitions of property, plant and equipment are recorded as disbursements when paid. These items are not reflected as assets on the accompanying financial statements.

**HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP
MERCER COUNTY**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2005 AND 2004
(Continued)**

2. EQUITY IN POOLED CASH

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

	<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>
Demand deposits	<u>\$ 108,967</u>	<u>\$ 103,763</u>

Deposits are either (1) insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or (2) collateralized by securities specifically pledged by the financial institution to the Township, or (3) collateralized by the financial institution's public entity deposit pool.

3. BUDGETARY ACTIVITY

Budgetary activity for the years ended December 31, 2005 and 2004 follows:

2005 Budgeted vs. Actual Receipts			
Fund Type	Budgeted Receipts	Actual Receipts	Variance
General	\$27,051	\$27,173	\$122
Special Revenue	119,776	139,986	20,210
Total	\$146,827	\$167,159	\$20,332

2005 Budgeted vs. Actual Budgetary Basis Expenditures			
Fund Type	Appropriation Authority	Budgetary Expenditures	Variance
General	\$47,560	\$32,440	\$15,120
Special Revenue	203,030	129,515	73,515
Total	\$250,590	\$161,955	\$88,635

**HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP
MERCER COUNTY**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2005 AND 2004
(Continued)**

3. BUDGETARY ACTIVITY (Continued)

2004 Budgeted vs. Actual Receipts			
Fund Type	Budgeted Receipts	Actual Receipts	Variance
General	\$20,984	\$40,909	\$19,925
Special Revenue	109,364	132,688	23,324
Total	\$130,348	\$173,597	\$43,249

2004 Budgeted vs. Actual Budgetary Basis Expenditures			
Fund Type	Appropriation Authority	Budgetary Expenditures	Variance
General	\$33,768	\$33,183	\$585
Special Revenue	178,080	118,151	59,929
Total	\$211,848	\$151,334	\$60,514

Contrary to Ohio Rev. Code Section 5705.41 (D), the certification of availability of unencumbered appropriations for expenditure was not obtained for 76% of expenditures tested during 2005 and 83% of expenditures testing during 2004.

4. PROPERTY TAX

Real property taxes become a lien on January 1 preceding the October 1 date for which rates are adopted by Board of Trustees. The State Board of Tax Equalization adjusts these rates for inflation. Property taxes are also reduced for applicable homestead and rollback deductions. Homestead and rollback amounts are then paid by the State, and are reflected in the accompanying financial statements as Intergovernmental Receipts. Payments are due to the County by December 31. If the property owner elects to make semiannual payment, 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.

**HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP
MERCER COUNTY**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2005 AND 2004
(Continued)**

5. RETIREMENT SYSTEMS

The Township's elected officials and employees belong to the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) of Ohio. PERS is a cost-sharing, multi-employer plan. This plan provides retirement benefits, including post retirement healthcare, and survivor and disability benefits to participants as prescribed by the Ohio Revised Code.

Contribution rates are also prescribed by the Ohio Revised Code. For 2005 and 2004, members of PERS contributed 8.5% of their gross salaries. The Township contributed an amount equal to 13.55% of participants' gross salaries. The Township has paid all contributions required through December 31, 2005.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk Pool Membership

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

OTARMA retains casualty risks up to \$250,000 per claim, including loss adjustment expenses. OTARMA pays a percentage of its contributions to APEEP. APEEP reinsures claims exceeding \$250,000 are reinsured with APEEP up to \$1,750,000 per claim and \$5,000,000 in the aggregate per year. Governments can elect additional coverage, from \$2,000,000 to \$10,000,000 from the General Reinsurance Corporation.

If losses exhaust OTARMA's retained earnings, APEEP covers OTARMA losses up to \$5,000,000 per year, subject to a per-claim limit of \$2,000,000.

Property Coverage

OTARMA retains property risks, including automobile physical damage, up to \$100,000 on any specific loss in any one occurrence. The Travelers Indemnity Company reinsures losses exceeding \$100,000 up to \$500,000,000 per occurrence. APEEP's Guarantee Fund pays losses and loss adjustment expenses exceeding operating contributions.

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 township.

**HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP
MERCER COUNTY**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
DECEMBER 31, 2005 AND 2004
(Continued)**

6. 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, 2004 and 2003 (the latest information available):

<u>Casualty Coverage</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>
Assets	\$30,687,203	\$27,792,223
Liabilities	<u>(13,640,962)</u>	<u>(11,791,300)</u>
Retained earnings	<u>\$17,046,241</u>	<u>\$16,000,923</u>

<u>Property Coverage</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>
Assets	\$7,799,073	\$6,791,060
Liabilities	<u>(753,906)</u>	<u>(750,956)</u>
Retained earnings	<u>\$7,045,167</u>	<u>\$6,040,104</u>

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

July 18, 2006

Hopewell Township
Mercer County
3419 Fetters Road
Rockford, OH 44882

To the Board of Trustees:

We have audited the financial statements of Hopewell Township, Mercer County, (the Township) as of and for the years ended December 31, 2005 and 2004, and have issued our report thereon dated July 18, 2006, wherein we noted the Township followed accounting practices the Auditor of State prescribes rather than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. 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 to determine our auditing procedures to express our opinion on the financial statements and not to opine on the internal control over financial reporting. Our consideration of the internal control would not necessarily disclose all matters in the internal control over financial reporting that might be material weaknesses. A material weakness is a reportable condition in which the design or operation of one or more of the internal control components does not reduce to a relatively low level the risk that misstatements caused by error or fraud in amounts material to the financial statements we audited may occur and not be timely detected by employees when performing their assigned functions. We noted no matters involving the internal control over financial reporting and its operation that we consider material weaknesses. In a separate letter to the Township's management dated July 18, 2006, we reported other matters involving internal control over financial reporting we did not deem reportable conditions.

Hopewell Township
Mercer County
Independent Accountants' Report on Internal Control Over
Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters
Required by *Government Auditing Standards*
Page 2

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 instances of noncompliance that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards* and which are described in the accompanying schedule of findings and responses as items 2005-001. In a separate letter to the Township's management dated July 18, 2006, we reported matters related to noncompliance we deemed immaterial.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the audit committee, management and Township Trustees and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

Respectfully Submitted,

Perry and Associates
Certified Public Accountants, A.C.

**HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP
MERCER COUNTY**

**SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS
DECEMBER 31, 2005 AND 2004**

FINDINGS RELATED TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS REQUIRED TO BE REPORTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GAGAS
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FINDING NUMBER 2005-001

Noncompliance Citation

Ohio Revised Code § 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 (Clerk) 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 taxing authority (Board of Township Trustees) 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 \$1,000 (which was increased to \$3,000 on April 7, 2003) 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 not exceeding \$5,000 against any specific line item account over a period not exceeding three months or running beyond the current 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. Effective September 26, 2003, certificates may not exceed an amount established by resolution or ordinance of the legislative authority, and cannot extend beyond the end of the fiscal year. Blanket certificates cannot be issued unless there has been an amount approved by the legislative authority for the blanket.
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.

**HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP
WASHINGTON COUNTY**

**SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS
DECEMBER 31, 2005 AND 2004**

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

FINDING NUMBER 2005-001 (Continued)

Ohio Revised Code § 5705.41(D)(1) (Continued)

The Township did not properly certify the availability of funds prior to purchase commitment for 76% of the expenditures tested during 2005 and 83% of the expenditures tested during 2004 and there was no evidence that the Township followed the aforementioned exceptions. Without these certifications, the management of the Township lost budgetary control over expenditures.

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 Clerk certify that the funds are or will be available prior to an obligation being incurred by the Township. When prior certification is not possible, "then and now" certification should be used.

Management's Response – Management chose to not respond.



**Auditor of State
Betty Montgomery**

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HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP

MERCER 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 19, 2006**