



Mary Taylor, CPA
Auditor of State

**VENICE TOWNSHIP
SENECA COUNTY**

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Mary Taylor, CPA
Auditor of State

Venice Township
Seneca County
7303 South Township Road 187
Attica, Ohio 44807-9430

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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June 2, 2009

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Auditor of State

INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REPORT

Venice Township
Seneca County
7303 South Township Road 187
Attica, Ohio 44807-9430

To the Board of Trustees:

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Venice Township, Seneca 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.

Also, in our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the combined fund cash balances of Venice Township, Seneca County, 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.

As described in Note 2, for the year ended December 31, 2007, the Township changed its financial presentation from the cash basis comparable to the requirements of Governmental Accounting Standards No. 34, *Basic Financial Statements and Management's Discussion and Analysis for State and Local Governments* to the accounting practices the Auditor of State prescribes or permits.

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 June 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.



Mary Taylor, CPA
Auditor of State

June 2, 2009

**VENICE TOWNSHIP
SENECA 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>Governmental Fund Types</u>			Totals (Memorandum Only)
	<u>General</u>	<u>Special Revenue</u>	<u>Capital Projects</u>	
Cash Receipts:				
Property and Other Local Taxes	\$17,598	\$53,340		\$70,938
Charges for Services		10,200		10,200
Intergovernmental	82,488	117,705		200,193
Earnings on Investments	1,832	1,081	\$400	3,313
Total Cash Receipts	<u>101,918</u>	<u>182,326</u>	<u>400</u>	<u>284,644</u>
Cash Disbursements:				
Current:				
General Government	82,458			82,458
Public Safety	951			951
Public Works		114,203		114,203
Health	2,755			2,755
Total Cash Disbursements	<u>86,164</u>	<u>114,203</u>		<u>200,367</u>
Total Receipts Over Disbursements	<u>15,754</u>	<u>68,123</u>	<u>400</u>	<u>84,277</u>
Other Financing Receipts / (Disbursements):				
Transfers-In			5,000	5,000
Transfers-Out	(5,000)			(5,000)
Other Financing Sources	30			30
Total Other Financing Receipts / (Disbursements)	<u>(4,970)</u>		<u>5,000</u>	<u>30</u>
Excess of Cash Receipts and Other Financing Receipts Over Cash Disbursements and Other Financing Disbursements	<u>10,784</u>	<u>68,123</u>	<u>5,400</u>	<u>84,307</u>
Fund Cash Balances, January 1	<u>20,232</u>	<u>121,191</u>	<u>15,692</u>	<u>157,115</u>
Fund Cash Balances, December 31	<u><u>\$31,016</u></u>	<u><u>\$189,314</u></u>	<u><u>\$21,092</u></u>	<u><u>\$241,422</u></u>

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

**VENICE TOWNSHIP
SENECA 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>Governmental Fund Types</u>			<u>Totals (Memorandum Only)</u>
	<u>General</u>	<u>Special Revenue</u>	<u>Capital Projects</u>	
Cash Receipts:				
Property and Other Local Taxes	\$20,005	\$58,537		\$78,542
Charges for Services	735	14,417		15,152
Intergovernmental	37,069	109,184	\$19,269	165,522
Earnings on Investments	2,991	1,089	400	4,480
	<u>60,800</u>	<u>183,227</u>	<u>19,669</u>	<u>263,696</u>
Total Cash Receipts				
	<u>60,800</u>	<u>183,227</u>	<u>19,669</u>	<u>263,696</u>
Cash Disbursements:				
Current:				
General Government	80,611			80,611
Public Safety	936			936
Public Works		162,035		162,035
Health	1,931			1,931
Capital Outlay	760		19,269	20,029
	<u>84,238</u>	<u>162,035</u>	<u>19,269</u>	<u>265,542</u>
Total Cash Disbursements				
	<u>84,238</u>	<u>162,035</u>	<u>19,269</u>	<u>265,542</u>
Total Receipts Over/(Under) Disbursements	<u>(23,438)</u>	<u>21,192</u>	<u>400</u>	<u>(1,846)</u>
Other Financing Receipts / (Disbursements):				
Transfers-In			5,000	5,000
Transfers-Out	(5,000)			(5,000)
Other Financing Sources	625	23		648
	<u>(4,375)</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>5,000</u>	<u>648</u>
Total Other Financing Receipts / (Disbursements)				
	<u>(4,375)</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>5,000</u>	<u>648</u>
Excess of Cash Receipts and Other Financing Receipts Over / (Under) Cash Disbursements and Other Financing Disbursements	<u>(27,813)</u>	<u>21,215</u>	<u>5,400</u>	<u>(1,198)</u>
Fund Cash Balances, January 1	<u>48,045</u>	<u>99,976</u>	<u>10,292</u>	<u>158,313</u>
Fund Cash Balances, December 31	<u><u>\$20,232</u></u>	<u><u>\$121,191</u></u>	<u><u>\$15,692</u></u>	<u><u>\$157,115</u></u>

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

**VENICE TOWNSHIP
SENECA 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 Venice Township, Seneca 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 Attica for sanitary sewer services.

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. Fund Accounting

The Township uses fund accounting to segregate cash that is 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.

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.

3. Capital Project Fund

This fund accounts for receipts restricted to acquiring or constructing major capital projects (except those financed through enterprise or trust funds). The Township had the following significant capital project fund:

**VENICE TOWNSHIP
SENECA COUNTY**

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

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

Works Projects Fund

The Public Works Projects Fund receives Issue II monies, from the County and Ohio Public Works Commission, for maintaining and repairing Township roads.

D. Budgetary Process

The Ohio Revised Code requires that each be budgeted annually.

1. 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. The County Budget Commission must also approve the annual appropriation measure. 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 individual commitments are made. Encumbrances outstanding at year end are cancelled and reappropriated in the subsequent year. The Township did not encumber all commitments required by Ohio law.

A summary of 2008 and 2007 budgetary activity appears in Note 4.

E. 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.

F. Accumulated Leave

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

2. Change in Basis of Accounting

In 2006, the Township reported the financial statements on the cash basis of accounting comparable to the requirements of Governmental Accounting Standard No. 34. For 2007, the Township reported on a regulatory basis. The Township no longer presents entity wide financial statements. The fund financial statements now present a column for each fund type, rather than a separate column for each major fund with nonmajor funds aggregated and presented in a single column.

**VENICE TOWNSHIP
SENECA COUNTY**

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

3. Equity in Pooled Deposits

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

	2008	2007
Demand deposits	\$106,086	\$58,001
Other time deposits (savings and NOW accounts)	135,336	99,114
Total deposits	\$241,422	\$157,115

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

4. 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	\$83,427	\$101,948	\$18,521
Special Revenue	154,000	182,326	28,326
Capital Projects	5,000	5,400	400
Total	\$242,427	\$289,674	\$47,247

2008 Budgeted vs. Actual Budgetary Basis Expenditures

Fund Type	Appropriation Authority	Budgetary Expenditures	Variance
General	\$86,489	\$91,164	(\$4,675)
Special Revenue	265,693	114,203	151,490
Total	\$352,182	\$205,367	\$146,815

2007 Budgeted vs. Actual Receipts

Fund Type	Budgeted Receipts	Actual Receipts	Variance
General	\$56,200	\$61,425	\$5,225
Special Revenue	144,000	183,250	39,250
Capital Projects	19,269	24,669	5,400
Total	\$219,469	\$269,344	\$49,875

2007 Budgeted vs. Actual Budgetary Basis Expenditures

Fund Type	Appropriation Authority	Budgetary Expenditures	Variance
General	\$111,656	\$89,238	\$22,418
Special Revenue	236,562	162,035	74,527
Capital Projects	19,269	19,269	
Total	\$367,487	\$270,542	\$96,945

**VENICE TOWNSHIP
SENECA COUNTY**

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

4. Budgetary Activity (Continued)

Contrary to Ohio law, budgetary expenditures exceeded appropriation authority in the General fund by \$4,675 for the year ended December 31, 2008. Also contrary to Ohio law, expenditure transactions were not certified by the fiscal officer.

5. 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.

6. Retirement System

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 plans' 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.

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.

**VENICE TOWNSHIP
SENECA COUNTY**

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

7. Risk Management (Continued)

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 \$3,000,000.

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.

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	(13,357,837)	(12,120,661)
Net Assets	<u>\$29,852,866</u>	<u>\$29,921,614</u>

**VENICE TOWNSHIP
SENECA COUNTY**

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

7. Risk Management (Continued)

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 \$4,000. 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>	
2006	\$5,598
2007	\$3,753
2008	\$4,035

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.



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

Venice Township
Seneca County
7303 South Township Road 187
Attica, Ohio 44807-9430

To the Board of Trustees:

We have audited the financial statements of Venice Township, Seneca County, Ohio (the Township), as of and for the years ended December 31, 2008 and 2007, and have issued our report thereon dated June 2, 2009 wherein we noted in 2007 the Township began preparing its financial statements in accordance with accounting practices the Auditor of State prescribes. 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 2008-001 and 2008-004 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 the significant deficiencies described above are also material weaknesses.

We also noted a certain internal control matter that we reported to the Township's management in a separate letter dated June 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 instances of noncompliance that we must report under *Government Auditing Standards* which are described in the accompanying schedule of findings as items 2008-001 through 2008-003.

We intend this report solely for the information and use of the audit committee, management and the Board of Trustees. We intend it for no one other than these specified parties.



Mary Taylor, CPA
Auditor of State

June 2, 2009

**VENICE TOWNSHIP
SENECA COUNTY**

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

FINDINGS RELATED TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS REQUIRED TO BE REPORTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GAGAS
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FINDING NUMBER 2008-001

Noncompliance Citation/Material Weakness

Ohio Revised Code, § 505.24(C), sets forth the method by which township trustees' compensation should be allocated. This section is amplified by **OAG Opinion 2004-036**. This section requires that compensation of a township trustee must be paid from the Township General Fund or from such other funds, in such proportions, as the Board may specify by resolution. In addition, trustees are to establish administrative procedures to document the proportionate amount of trustees' salaries chargeable to other township funds based on the portion of time spent on matters related to the services rendered. The "administrative procedures" can be timesheets or a similar method of record keeping, as long as the trustees document all time spent on township business and the type of services performed, in a manner similar to the trustees paid per diem compensation.

The Fiscal Officer incorrectly paid the Trustees salaries for 2008 and 2007 from the Motor Vehicle License Tax and Road and Bridge funds in the amount of \$2,122 and \$8,258 respectively and did not maintain records to document the Trustees' time spent on Township business and the type of service performed from the restricted funds.

The Township was notified of this requirement in the management letter dated June 12, 2007. A material audit adjustment was posted to the financial statements in each year.

FINDING NUMBER 2008-002

Noncompliance Citation

Ohio Revised Code, §5705.41(B), states no subdivision shall make an expenditure of money unless it has been lawfully appropriated. Expenditures exceeded appropriations as of December 31, 2008 in the following fund:

Fund	Appropriations	Expenditures	Variance
General Fund	\$86,489	\$91,164	(\$4,675)

Management was advised the failure to have adequate appropriations in place at the time expenditures are being made could cause expenditures to exceed available resources, further resulting in deficit spending practices.

The Fiscal Officer should not certify the availability of funds and should deny payment requests exceeding appropriations. The Fiscal Officer may request the Board approve increased expenditure levels by increasing appropriations and amending estimated resources, if necessary.

FINDING NUMBER 2008-003

Noncompliance Citation

Ohio Revised Code, § 5705.41(D)(1), states that no orders or contracts involving the expenditure of money are to be made unless there is attached thereto a certificate of the Fiscal Officer certifying that the amount required for the order or contract has been lawfully appropriated and is in the treasury or in the process of collection to the credit of an appropriate fund free from any previous encumbrances. Every such contract made without such a certificate shall be null and 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 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 collections, to the credit of a proper fund, properly appropriated and free from any previous encumbrance, the Board can authorize the drawing of a warrant for the payment of the amount due. The Board has thirty days from the receipt of the "then and now" certificate to approve payment by ordinance or resolution.

Amounts 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 Board.

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 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 Board 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 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.

Forty-eight percent of the transactions tested were not certified by the Fiscal Officer at the time the commitment was incurred, and there was no evidence the Township followed the aforementioned exceptions. Failure to properly certify the availability of funds can result in overspending funds and negative cash fund balances.

Certification is not only required by Ohio law but is a key control in the disbursements process to help assure purchase commitments receive prior approval, and help reduce the possibility of Township funds being over expended or exceeding budgetary spending limitations as set by the Board. To improve controls over disbursements, we recommend all Township disbursements receive prior certification of the Fiscal Officer and the Board periodically review the expenditures made to ensure they are within the appropriations adopted by the Board, certified by the Fiscal Officer and recorded against appropriations.

FINDING NUMBER 2008-004

Material Weakness

Financial Reporting

Errors were noted in the financial statements that required material audit adjustments. Homestead and rollback funds in the amount of \$5,828 were posted in the General Fund rather than the Road and Bridge Fund in 2008. In addition, state funds were posted as tax revenues rather than intergovernmental revenues in the amounts of \$6,125 in 2007 and \$2,555 in 2008.

Sound financial reporting is the responsibility of the Fiscal Officer and the governing board and is essential to ensure the information provided to the readers of the financial statements is complete and accurate.

To ensure the Township's financial statements and notes to the statements are complete and accurate, the Board should adopt policies and procedures, including a final review of the statements and notes by the Fiscal Officer and audit committee to identify and correct errors and omissions. The Fiscal Officer should also review the UAN chart of accounts and the Township Handbook's chart of accounts to ensure all accounts are being properly posted to the financial statements.

Officials' Response:

We did not receive a response from Officials to these findings reported above.



Mary Taylor, CPA
Auditor of State

VENICE TOWNSHIP

SENECA 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
JUNE 30, 2009**