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CLEAN AUDIT - SEPARATING TRUTH FROM FICTION: DEBUNKING FALSE AND UNSUBSTANTIATED CLAIMS

(BEACHWOOD, OHIO – October 19, 2023) Over the last several months, the city administration has been working with the Auditor of State’s office to separate truth from fiction and debunk false and unsubstantiated claims. The false claims and misinformation provided to this agency largely relate to our professional engineering services.

The City of Beachwood furnished essential information and documentation to the State of Ohio effectively refuting these baseless claims. None of the allegations have been substantiated. “These false allegations had the potential to impact the city’s bond rating which would cost the city’s taxpayers millions. It is important to note that a AAA bond rating for a municipality is crucial because it can lead to lower borrowing costs, access to a wider pool of investors, and fosters a strong reputation for responsible financial management,” said Mayor Justin Berns.

This rating not only benefits the municipality’s ability to finance projects and stimulate economic development, but also promotes a culture of fiscal discipline and responsible governance. Additionally, it’s a crucial tool for Economic Development, enabling Beachwood businesses to save substantial dollars in debt costs.

After countless hours of work by the administration (mainly the Audit, Finance and Law Departments) the city is pleased with the outcome. The office of Ohio Auditor of State Keith Faber released the independent Auditor’s Report of the City of Beachwood prepared by Charles E. Harris & Associates, Inc., for the audit period January 1, 2022, through December 31, 2022. The Audit report found no instances of noncompliance, no management letter issues, no verbal comments, no material findings, and issued an unqualified audit opinion. “This is the best audit opinion a city can receive,” said Finance Director, Larry Heiser. The clean audit is indicative of the city’s superior record keeping and demonstrates its commitment to efficient, effective, and transparent service.

The city thanks Charles Harris & Associates for their professionalism and the State Auditor’s office for assisting in releasing the report so the city could meet the filing deadline relative to the AAA rating. Preserving the AAA bond rating and consistently achieving clean audit reports are enduring accomplishments that underscore the city’s commitment to fiscal responsibility.

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