

COMPLIANCE AUDIT

Ridgway Firemen's Relief Association, Inc. Elk County, Pennsylvania For the Period January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2014

November 2015



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of the Auditor General

Eugene A. DePasquale • Auditor General



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EUGENE A. DePASQUALE
AUDITOR GENERAL

Mr. Joseph M. Gier, President
Ridgway Volunteer Firefighters'
Relief Association
Elk County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Ridgway Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association pursuant to authority derived from Article VIII, Section 10 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Section 403 of The Fiscal Code, Act of April 9, 1929, (P.L. 343, No. 176), and mandated by the Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Act, as consolidated by the Act of November 23, 2010 (P.L. 1181, No. 118), at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7411 *et seq.*, for the period January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2014.

The objective of the audit was to determine if the volunteer firefighters' relief association received state aid and expended state aid and accumulated relief funds in compliance with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures. Our audit was limited to the areas related to the objective identified above.

Volunteer firefighters' relief association officers are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the Ridgway Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association's administration of state aid and accumulated relief funds complies with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures, including the safeguarding of assets. Volunteer firefighters' relief association officers are responsible for complying with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures. It is our responsibility to perform procedures to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to the extent necessary to satisfy the audit objective. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our conclusions.

Based on our audit procedures, we concluded that, for the period January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2014:

- The Ridgway Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association, in all significant respects, received state aid and expended state aid and accumulated relief funds in compliance with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures.

The supplementary financial information contained in this report is presented for purposes of additional disclosure and analysis. We performed only limited procedures on the supplementary financial information and, accordingly, express no form of assurance on it.

The contents of this report were discussed with the management of the Ridgway Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association. We would like to thank the relief association officials for the cooperation extended to us during the conduct of the audit.

October 30, 2015



EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE
Auditor General

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BACKGROUND

Pursuant to Article VIII, Section 10 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Section 403 of The Fiscal Code, Act of April 9, 1929, (P.L. 343, No. 176), and the Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Act, as consolidated by the Act of November 23, 2010, (P.L. 1181, No. 118), at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7411 *et seq.*, the Department of the Auditor General's duty is to audit the accounts and records of every volunteer firefighters' relief association to determine that funds received under the Foreign Fire Insurance Tax Distribution Law, Act of December 18, 1984, (P.L. 1005, No. 205), as amended, 53 P.S. § 895.701 *et seq.* (commonly referred to as Act 205), are properly expended.

The Ridgway Firemen's Relief Association, Inc., herein referred to as the Ridgway Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association, is a charitable organization that was formed primarily to afford financial protection to volunteer firefighters and to encourage individuals to participate in volunteer fire service.

Act 118 governs the overall operation of the volunteer firefighters' relief association. The relief association's bylaws define the specific operational procedures by which the volunteer firefighters' relief association conducts business. To fulfill its primary purpose, Act 118 authorizes specific types of expenditures and prescribes appropriate volunteer firefighters' relief association investment options. Within the parameters established by Act 118, it is the responsibility of the volunteer firefighters' relief association to choose investments in a proper and prudent manner.

Volunteer firefighters' relief associations receive public tax monies, and the association officers therefore have a responsibility to the public to conduct the association's financial affairs in a businesslike manner and to maintain sufficient financial records to support the propriety of all association transactions. Volunteer firefighters' relief association officers are also responsible for ensuring that the association operates in accordance with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws and administrative procedures.

Act 205 sets forth the computation of the Foreign Fire Insurance Tax Distribution paid to each applicable municipality throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The amount of the distribution is based upon the population of each municipality and the market value of real estate within the municipality. Upon receipt of this distribution, the municipality must allocate the funds to the volunteer firefighters' relief association of the fire service organization or fire service organizations, which is or are recognized as providing the service to the municipality.

BACKGROUND – (Continued)

The Ridgway Volunteer Firefighters’ Relief Association was allocated state aid from the following municipalities:

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>
Ridgway Borough	Elk	\$18,125	\$20,150	\$19,128
Ridgway Township	Elk	\$ 9,088	\$10,163	\$ 9,645
Spring Creek Township	Elk	\$ 1,597	\$ 1,812	\$ 1,706

The volunteer firefighters’ relief association and the affiliated fire service organizations are separate, legal entities. The Ridgway Volunteer Firefighters’ Relief Association is affiliated with the Ridgway Volunteer Fire Department, Inc., which consists of the following fire service organizations:

Capital City Hose Company

Elk Hose Company

Laurel Hook and Ladder Company

Second Ward Hose Company

Montmorenci Area Fire Company

RIDGWAY VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
 SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION
 FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2012 TO DECEMBER 31, 2014

Cash Balance:	\$	56,513
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Fair Value of Investment Balance:	\$	633,708
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Expenditures:

Benefit Services:

Insurance premiums	\$	17,663
Death benefits		73,025
Relief benefits		2,775
Total Benefit Services	\$	<u>93,463</u>

Fire Services:

Equipment purchased	\$	56,396
Equipment maintenance		15,422
Training expenses		2,915
Total Fire Services	\$	<u>74,733</u>

Administrative Services:

Officer compensation	\$	3,050
Other administrative expenses		867
Bond Premiums		392
Total Administrative Services	\$	<u>4,309</u>

RIDGWAY VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATION
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom W. Wolf
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Ridgway Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Governing Body:

Mr. Joseph Gier	President
Mr. Jerry Rosenhoover	Vice President
Mr. Forrest Kinley, Jr.	Secretary
Mr. L. Michael Plaster	Treasurer

The following municipalities allocated foreign fire insurance tax monies to this relief association and received a copy of this report:

Mr. Kim Zimmerman Ridgway Borough	Secretary
Ms. Milly Bowers Ridgway Township	Secretary
Ms. Donna S. Kosick Spring Creek Township	Secretary

This report is a matter of public record and is available online at www.PaAuditor.gov. Media questions about the report can be directed to the Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General, Office of Communications, 229 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120; via email to: news@PaAuditor.gov.