COMPLIANCE AUDIT

Plains Township Non-Uniformed Employees Pension Plan

Luzerne County, Pennsylvania

For the Period

January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2015

April 2016

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of the Auditor General

Eugene A. DePasquale • Auditor General

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Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of the Auditor General
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0018
Facebook: Pennsylvania Auditor General
Twitter: @PAAuditorGen
www.PaAuditor.gov

EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE
AUDITOR GENERAL

Board of Township Commissioners
Plains Township
Luzerne County
Plains, PA 18705

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Plains Township Non-Uniformed Employees Pension Plan for the period January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2015. We also evaluated compliance with some requirements subsequent to that period when possible. The audit was conducted pursuant to authority derived from Section 402(j) of Act 205 and in accordance with the standards applicable to performance audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our conclusions based on our audit objective. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our conclusions based on our audit objective.

The objective of the audit was to determine if the pension plan was administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies.

Our audit was limited to the areas related to the objective identified above. To determine whether the pension plan was administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies, our methodology included the following:

- × We determined whether state aid was properly determined and deposited in accordance with Act 205 requirements by verifying the annual deposit date of state aid and determining whether deposits were made within 30 days of receipt for all years within the period under audit.

- × We determined whether annual employer contributions were calculated and deposited in accordance with the plan's governing document and applicable laws and regulations by examining the municipality's calculation of the plan's annual financial requirements and minimum municipal obligation (MMO) and comparing these calculated amounts to amounts actually budgeted and deposited into the pension plan as evidenced by supporting documentation.

- We determined whether annual employee contributions were calculated, deducted, and deposited into the pension plan in accordance with the plan's governing document and applicable laws and regulations by testing members' contributions on an annual basis using the rates obtained from the plan's governing document in effect for all years within the period under audit and examining documents evidencing the deposit of these employee contributions into the pension plan.

- We determined whether retirement benefits calculated for the plan member who retired during the current audit period represent payments to all (and only) those entitled to receive them and were properly determined and disbursed in accordance with the plan's governing document, applicable laws and regulations by recalculating the amount of the monthly pension benefit due to the retired individual and comparing this amount to supporting documentation evidencing the amount determined and actually paid to the recipient.

- We determined whether the January 1, 2013 and January 1, 2015 actuarial valuation reports were prepared and submitted to the Public Employee Retirement Commission (PERC) by March 31, 2014 and 2016, respectfully, in accordance with Act 205 and whether selected information provided on these reports is accurate, complete, and in accordance with plan provisions to ensure compliance for participation in the state aid program by comparing selected information to supporting source documentation.

Plains Township contracted with an independent certified public accounting firm for an audit of its basic financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2014 which are available at the township's offices. Those financial statements were not audited by us and, accordingly, we express no opinion or other form of assurance on them.

Township officials are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the Plains Township Non-Uniformed Employees Pension Plan is administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies. In conducting our audit, we obtained an understanding of the township's internal controls as they relate to the township's compliance with those requirements and that we considered to be significant within the context of our audit objective, and assessed whether those significant controls were properly designed and implemented. Additionally and as previously described, we tested transactions, assessed official actions, performed analytical procedures, and interviewed selected officials to provide reasonable assurance of detecting instances of noncompliance with legal and regulatory requirements or noncompliance with provisions of contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies that are significant within the context of the audit objective.

The results of our procedures indicated that, in all significant respects, the Plains Township Non-Uniformed Employees Pension Plan was administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies.

As previously noted, the objective of our audit of the Plains Township Non-Uniformed Employees Pension Plan was to determine compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies. Act 205 was amended on September 18, 2009, through the adoption of Act 44 of 2009. Among several provisions relating to municipal pension plans, the act provides for the implementation of a distress recovery program. Three levels of distress have been established:

Level	Indication	Funding Criteria
I	Minimal distress	70-89%
II	Moderate distress	50-69%
III	Severe distress	Less than 50%

The accompanying supplementary information is presented for purposes of additional analysis. We did not audit the information or conclude on it and, accordingly, express no form of assurance on it. However, we are extremely concerned about the funded status of the plan contained in the schedule of funding progress included in this report which indicates **the plan's funded ratio is 65.1% as of January 1, 2015**, which is the most recent data available. **Based on this information, the township will be notified by the Public Employee Retirement Commission that they will be in Level II moderate distress status.** We encourage township officials to monitor the funding of the non-uniformed employees pension plan to ensure its long-term financial stability.

The contents of this report were discussed with officials of Plains Township and, where appropriate, their responses have been included in the report. We would like to thank township officials for the cooperation extended to us during the conduct of the audit.

April 21, 2016

EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE
Auditor General

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BACKGROUND

On December 18, 1984, the Pennsylvania Legislature adopted the Municipal Pension Plan Funding Standard and Recovery Act (P.L. 1005, No. 205, as amended, 53 P.S. § 895.101 et seq.). The act established mandatory actuarial reporting and funding requirements and a uniform basis for the distribution of state aid to Pennsylvania's public pension plans. Section 402(j) of Act 205 specifically requires the Auditor General, as deemed necessary, to make an audit of every municipality which receives general municipal pension system state aid and of every municipal pension plan and fund in which general municipal pension system state aid is deposited.

Annual state aid allocations are provided from a 2 percent foreign (out-of-state) casualty insurance premium tax, a portion of the foreign (out-of-state) fire insurance tax designated for paid firefighters and any investment income earned on the collection of these taxes. Generally, municipal pension plans established prior to December 18, 1984, are eligible for state aid. For municipal pension plans established after that date, the sponsoring municipality must fund the plan for three plan years before it becomes eligible for state aid. In accordance with Act 205, a municipality's annual state aid allocation cannot exceed its actual pension costs.

In addition to Act 205, the Plains Township Non-Uniformed Employees Pension Plan is also governed by implementing regulations adopted by the Public Employee Retirement Commission published at Title 16, Part IV of the Pennsylvania Code and applicable provisions of various other state statutes.

The Plains Township Non-Uniformed Employees Pension Plan is a single-employer defined benefit pension plan locally controlled by the provisions of a plan agreement dated February 26, 1988, as amended. The plan is also affected by the provisions of collective bargaining agreements between the township and its non-uniformed employees. The plan was established January 1, 1979. Active members are required to contribute 5 percent of compensation to the plan. As of December 31, 2015, the plan had 17 active members, no terminated members eligible for vested benefits in the future, and 13 retirees receiving pension benefits from the plan.

BACKGROUND – (Continued)

As of December 31, 2015, selected plan benefit provisions are as follows:

Eligibility Requirements:

Normal Retirement	Age 62
Early Retirement	Age 55 and 10 years of service.
Vesting	A member is 10% vested per year of service up to a maximum of 100% after 10 years of service.

Retirement Benefit:

Benefit equals 1.80% of average monthly pay based on highest 3 consecutive years of compensation times the number of years of service.

Survivor Benefit:

If a vested member dies prior to retirement, a death benefit is payable equal to the present value of his vested accrued benefit.

Service Related Disability Benefit:

If disabled member qualifies for Social Security disability benefits, he is eligible for a disability pension equal to the benefit accrued to the date of disability.

PLAINS TOWNSHIP NON-UNIFORMED EMPLOYEES PENSION PLAN
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
(UNAUDITED)

SCHEDULE OF FUNDING PROGRESS

Historical trend information about the plan is presented herewith as supplementary information. It is intended to help users assess the plan's funding status on a going-concern basis, assess progress made in accumulating assets to pay benefits when due, and make comparisons with other state and local government retirement systems.

The actuarial information is required by Act 205 biennially. The historical information, beginning as of January 1, 2011, is as follows:

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Actuarial Valuation Date	Actuarial Value of Assets (a)	Actuarial Accrued Liability (AAL) - Entry Age (b)	Unfunded (Assets in Excess of) Actuarial Accrued Liability (b) - (a)	Funded Ratio (a)/(b)
01-01-11	$ 1,595,816	$ 2,378,879	$ 783,063	67.1%
01-01-13	1,720,877	2,801,565	1,080,688	61.4%
01-01-15	2,070,069	3,179,687	1,109,618	65.1%

Note: The market values of the plan's assets at 01-01-11, 01-01-13, and 01-01-15 have been adjusted to reflect the smoothing of gains and/or losses over a 5-year averaging period. This method will lower contributions in years of less than expected returns and increase contributions in years of greater than expected returns. The net effect over long periods of time is to have less variance in contribution levels from year to year.

The comparability of trend information is affected by changes in actuarial assumptions, benefit provisions, actuarial funding methods, accounting policies, and other changes. Those changes usually affect trends in contribution requirements and in ratios that use the actuarial accrued liability as a factor.

Analysis of the dollar amount of the actuarial value of assets, actuarial accrued liability, and unfunded (assets in excess of) actuarial accrued liability in isolation can be misleading. Expressing the actuarial value of assets as a percentage of the actuarial accrued liability (Column 4) provides one indication of the plan's funding status on a going-concern basis. Analysis of this percentage, over time, indicates whether the system is becoming financially stronger or weaker. Generally, the greater this percentage, the stronger the plan.

PLAINS TOWNSHIP NON-UNIFORMED EMPLOYEES PENSION PLAN
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
(UNAUDITED)

SCHEDULE OF CONTRIBUTIONS FROM EMPLOYER
AND OTHER CONTRIBUTING ENTITIES

Year Ended December 31	Annual Required Contribution	Percentage Contributed
2010	$ 98,660	100.0%
2011	92,395	127.2%
2012	91,159	100.0%
2013	123,613	100.0%
2014	124,777	100.0%
2015	157,100	100.0%

PLAINS TOWNSHIP NON-UNIFORMED EMPLOYEES PENSION PLAN
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
NOTES TO SUPPLEMENTARY SCHEDULES
(UNAUDITED)

The information presented in the supplementary schedules was determined as part of the actuarial valuation at the date indicated. Additional information as of the latest actuarial valuation date follows:

Actuarial valuation date	January 1, 2015
Actuarial cost method	Entry age normal
Amortization method	Level dollar
Remaining amortization period	12 years
Asset valuation method	Fair value, 5-year smoothing
Actuarial assumptions:	
Investment rate of return	7.0%
Projected salary increases	4.0%

PLAINS TOWNSHIP NON-UNIFORMED EMPLOYEES PENSION PLAN
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom W. Wolf
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Mr. Robert Sax
Chairman, Board of Township Commissioners

Mr. Gerald Yozwiak
Vice Chairman, Board of Township Commissioners

Mr. Ciro Cinti
Township Commissioner

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