

COMPLIANCE AUDIT

Braddock Hills Borough Police Pension Plan Allegheny County, Pennsylvania For the Period January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2017

March 2018



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of the Auditor General

Eugene A. DePasquale • Auditor General



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**EUGENE A. DePASQUALE
AUDITOR GENERAL**

The Honorable Mayor and Borough Council
Braddock Hills Borough
Allegheny County
Pittsburgh, PA 15221

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Braddock Hills Borough Police Pension Plan for the period January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2017. 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 total 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 that there were no benefit calculations prepared for the years covered by our audit period.
- We determined whether the January 1, 2013, January 1, 2015, and January 1, 2017 actuarial valuation reports were prepared and submitted by March 31, 2014, 2016, and 2018, respectively, 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.
- We determined whether the pension plan is in compliance with Act 205 for distressed municipalities through inquiry of plan officials and evaluation of the recovery remedies implemented during the audit period and through the completion of our fieldwork procedures.

Braddock Hills Borough contracted with an independent certified public accounting firm for annual audits of its financial statements for the years ended December 31, 2014, 2015, and 2016, prepared in conformity with the accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the Department of Community and Economic Development of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, which are available at the borough's offices. Those financial statements were not audited by us and, accordingly, we express no opinion or other form of assurance on them.

Borough officials are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the Braddock Hills Borough Police 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 borough's internal controls as they relate to the borough'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 Braddock Hills Borough Police 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 Braddock Hills Borough Police 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:

<u>Level</u>	<u>Indication</u>	<u>Funding Criteria</u>
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 60.4% as of January 1, 2017**, which is the most recent data available. **Based on this information, the borough is currently in Level II moderate distress status.** We encourage borough officials to monitor the funding of the police pension plan to ensure its long-term financial stability.

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

March 8, 2018



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 Braddock Hills Borough Police Pension Plan is also governed by implementing regulations adopted by the former Public Employee Retirement Commission published at Title 16, Part IV of the Pennsylvania Code and applicable provisions of various other state statutes including, but not limited to, the following:

Act 600 - Police Pension Fund Act, Act of May 29, 1956 (P.L. 1804, No. 600), as amended, 53 P.S. § 767 et seq.

The Braddock Hills Borough Police Pension Plan is a single-employer defined benefit pension plan. For members hired prior to January 1, 2011, the pension plan is locally controlled by the provisions of Ordinance No. 3 of 1996, as amended, adopted pursuant to 600. For members hired after January 1, 2011, the pension plan is locally controlled by the provisions of Ordinance No. 1 of 2012, adopted pursuant to remedies mandated for moderately distressed pension plans under Act 44 of 2009. The plan is also affected by the provisions of collective bargaining agreements between the borough and its police officers. The plan was established December 14, 1967. Active members are required to contribute 5 percent of compensation to the plan. As of December 31, 2017, the plan had 2 active members (Act 600), no terminated members eligible for vested benefits in the future, and 4 retirees receiving pension benefits from the plan.

BACKGROUND – (Continued)

As of December 31, 2017, selected plan benefit provisions are as follows:

Eligibility Requirements:

Normal Retirement	Hired before January 1, 2011: Age 55 and 25 years of service Hired on or after January 1, 2011: Age 62 and 10 years of service
Early Retirement	Hired before January 1, 2011: None Hired on or after January 1, 2011: Age 55 and 10 years of service
Vesting	100% after 12 years of service.

Retirement Benefit:

Hired before January 1, 2011: A monthly benefit equal to 50% of gross pay averaged over the last 60 months of employment.

Hired on or after January 1, 2011: A monthly benefit equal to 1% of base pay averaged over the last 60 months of employment, multiplied by service, 25 years maximum.

Survivor Benefit:

Before Retirement Eligibility	Refund of member contributions plus interest.
After Retirement Eligibility	Hired before January 1, 2011: A monthly benefit equal to 50% of the pension the member was receiving or was entitled to receive on the day of the member's death. Hired after January 1, 2011: Refund of member contributions plus interest.

Service Related Disability Benefit:

Hired before January 1, 2011: 50% of member's salary at the time the disability was incurred, offset by social security disability benefits received for the same injury.

Hired on or after January 1, 2011: After 10 years of service, accrued benefit at date of disablement actuarially reduced for commencement at disablement date, offset by social security disability benefits received for the same injury.

BRADDOCK HILLS BOROUGH POLICE 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, 2013, 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)
01-01-13	\$ 259,309	\$ 558,585	\$ 299,276	46.4%
01-01-15	322,263	586,941	264,678	54.9%
01-01-17	384,887	636,909	252,022	60.4%

Note: The market values of the plan's assets at 01-01-13, 01-01-15, and 01-01-17 have been adjusted to reflect the smoothing of gains and/or losses over a 4-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.

BRADDOCK HILLS BOROUGH POLICE PENSION PLAN
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
(UNAUDITED)

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.

BRADDOCK HILLS BOROUGH POLICE PENSION PLAN
 SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
 (UNAUDITED)

SCHEDULE OF CONTRIBUTIONS FROM EMPLOYER
 AND OTHER CONTRIBUTING ENTITIES

Year Ended December 31	Annual Required Contribution	Percentage Contributed
2012	\$ 56,301	185.3%
2013	53,351	130.9%
2014	52,743	100.0%
2015	54,712	103.7%
2016	47,315	137.0%
2017	47,563	100.0%

BRADDOCK HILLS BOROUGH POLICE 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, 2017
Actuarial cost method	Entry age normal
Amortization method	Level dollar, closed
Remaining amortization period	9 years
Asset valuation method	Fair value, 4-year smoothing
Actuarial assumptions:	
Investment rate of return	7.25%
Projected salary increases	4.50%

BRADDOCK HILLS BOROUGH POLICE PENSION PLAN
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom W. Wolf
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

The Honorable Jack Brown
Mayor

Mr. Charles Arthrell
Council President

Mr. Thomas Evans
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Ms. Linda Yazvac
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Ms. Cheryl Sorrentino
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