

# COMPLIANCE AUDIT

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## Municipality of Bethel Park Non-Uniformed Pension Plan Allegheny County, Pennsylvania For the Period January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2015

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August 2016



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 Municipal Council  
Municipality of Bethel Park  
Allegheny County  
Bethel Park, PA 15102

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Municipality of Bethel Park Non-Uniformed 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 our audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our conclusions based on our audit objectives.

The objectives of the audit were:

1. To determine if municipal officials took appropriate corrective action to address the finding contained in our prior audit report; and
2. 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 objectives identified above. To determine if municipal officials took appropriate corrective action to address the finding contained in our prior audit report, we inquired of plan officials and evaluated supporting documentation provided by officials evidencing that the suggested corrective action has been appropriately taken. 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 all 4 of the plan members who retired during the current audit period, and through the completion of our fieldwork procedures, 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 individuals and comparing these amounts to supporting documentation evidencing amounts determined and actually paid to the recipients.
- We also determined whether retirement benefits calculated for the 1 plan member who elected to vest during the current audit period, represent payments to all (and only) those entitled to receive them and were properly determined in accordance with the plan's governing document, applicable laws and regulations by recalculating the amount of the pension benefit due and comparing these amounts to supporting documentation evidencing amounts determined.
- 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, 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.

The Municipality of Bethel Park contracted with an independent certified public accounting firm for annual audits of its basic financial statements which are available at the municipality's offices. Those financial statements were not audited by us and, accordingly, we express no opinion or other form of assurance on them.


Municipal officials are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the Municipality of Bethel Park Non-Uniformed 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 municipality's internal controls as they relate to the municipality's compliance with those requirements and that we considered to be significant within the context of our audit objectives, 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 objectives.

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

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.

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

July 20, 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 Municipality of Bethel Park Non-Uniformed 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 Municipality of Bethel Park Non-Uniformed Pension Plan is a single-employer defined benefit pension plan locally controlled by the provisions of Ordinance No. 3-12-07A. The plan is also affected by the provisions of collective bargaining agreements between the municipality and its non-uniformed employees. The plan was established November 1, 1964. Active members are required to contribute 4 percent of gross wages to the plan. As of December 31, 2015, the plan had 59 active members, 5 terminated members eligible for vested benefits in the future, and 40 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 65 and 15 years of service; if hired prior to January 1, 1993, age 65 and 5 years of service. |
| Early Retirement  | Age 55 and the completion of 15 years of service.   |
| Vesting           | A member is 100% vested after 10 years of service.  |

### Retirement Benefit:

A monthly benefit payable for life equal to 45% (50% for participants retiring with 16 to 20 years of service, 55% for participants retiring with 21 to 25 years of service and 60% for participants retiring with at least 26 years of service) of compensation averaged over final 36 months of employment times the ratio of completed years of service from date of hire through retirement date to 15 years (ratio not exceed 1.0).

### Survivor Benefit:

Before 10 Years of Service: Refund of member contributions plus interest.

After 10 Years of Service but before Retirement: The participant's spouse will receive the survivor's portion of the Accrued Benefit actuarially converted to a joint and 50% survivor annuity, reduced for early commencement.

After Retirement: The Normal Form of payment is a life annuity, with payments guaranteed to be not less than the participant's contributions plus interest. An optional form of benefit payment may be selected by the participant at retirement that is actuarially equivalent to the Normal Form.

### Disability Benefit:

None

MUNICIPALITY OF BETHEL PARK NON-UNIFORMED PENSION PLAN  
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDING

Compliance With Prior Audit Recommendation

The Municipality of Bethel Park has complied with the prior audit recommendation concerning the following:

- Incorrect Data On Certification Form AG 385 Resulting In An Overpayment Of State Aid

During the current audit period, the municipality returned \$7,768 to the Commonwealth for the overpayment of state aid received in 2013.



MUNICIPALITY OF BETHEL PARK NON-UNIFORMED PENSION PLAN  
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION  
(UNAUDITED)

The supplementary information contained on Pages 4 and 5 reflect the implementation of GASB Statement No. 67, *Financial Reporting for Pension Plans*. The objective of this statement is to improve financial reporting by state and local governmental pension plans.

SCHEDULE OF CHANGES IN THE NET PENSION  
LIABILITY AND RELATED RATIOS  
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2015 AND 2014

|  |                      |                      |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|
| Total Pension Liability  | <u>2015</u>          | <u>2014</u>          |
| Service cost   | \$ 336,566           | \$ 348,162           |
| Interest   | 1,084,682            | 1,037,820            |
| Differences between expected and actual experience                         | (95,791)             | -                    |
| Benefit payments, including refunds of member contributions                | <u>(672,679)</u>     | <u>(635,549)</u>     |
| Net Change in Total Pension Liability                                      | 652,778              | 750,433              |
| Total Pension Liability – Beginning  | 14,551,909           | 13,801,476           |
| Total Pension Liability - Ending (a)                                       | <u>\$ 15,204,687</u> | <u>\$ 14,551,909</u> |
| <br>   |                      |                      |
| Plan Fiduciary Net Position  |                      |                      |
| Contributions – employer   | \$ 653,896           | \$ 566,305           |
| Contribution – member  | 138,109              | 131,903              |
| Net investment income  | 18,263               | 1,071,812            |
| Benefit payments, including refunds of member contributions                | (672,679)            | (635,549)            |
| Administrative expense   | <u>(86,659)</u>      | <u>(68,079)</u>      |
| Net Change in Plan Fiduciary Net Position                                  | 50,930               | 1,066,391            |
| Plan Fiduciary Net Position - Beginning                                    | 12,534,323           | 11,467,932           |
| Plan Fiduciary Net Position - Ending (b)                                   | <u>\$ 12,585,253</u> | <u>\$ 12,534,323</u> |
| <br>   |                      |                      |
| Net Pension Liability - Ending (a-b)                                       | <u>\$ 2,619,434</u>  | <u>\$ 2,017,586</u>  |
| <br>   |                      |                      |
| Plan Fiduciary Net Position as a Percentage of the Total Pension Liability | 82.77%               | 86.14%               |
| <br>   |                      |                      |
| Estimated Covered Employee Payroll   | \$ 3,389,482         | \$ 3,218,217         |
| <br>   |                      |                      |
| Net Pension Liability as a Percentage of Covered Employee Payroll          | 77.28%               | 62.69%               |

MUNICIPALITY OF BETHEL PARK NON-UNIFORMED PENSION PLAN  
 SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION  
 (UNAUDITED)

Sensitivity of the Net Pension Liability to Changes in the Discount Rate

The following presents the net pension liability of the municipality, calculated using the discount rate of 7.5%, as well as what the municipality's net pension liability would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is 1 percentage-point lower or 1 percentage-point higher than the current rate:

|                       | 1% Decrease<br>(6.5%) | Current<br>Discount Rate<br>(7.5%) | 1% Increase<br>(8.5%) |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Net Pension Liability | \$ 4,312,902          | \$ 2,619,434                       | \$ 1,156,878          |

SCHEDULE OF INVESTMENT RETURNS

Annual Money-Weighted Rate of Return, Net of Investment Expense:

|      |       |
|------|-------|
| 2015 | .15%  |
| 2014 | 9.47% |

MUNICIPALITY OF BETHEL PARK NON-UNIFORMED 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<br>Valuation<br>Date | Actuarial<br>Value of<br>Assets<br>(a) | Actuarial<br>Accrued<br>Liability<br>(AAL) -<br>Entry Age<br>(b) | Unfunded<br>(Assets in<br>Excess of)<br>Actuarial<br>Accrued<br>Liability<br>(b) - (a) | Funded<br>Ratio<br>(a)/(b) |
| 01-01-11                       | \$ 8,832,311                           | \$ 12,047,421  | \$ 3,215,110   | 73.3%                      |
| 01-01-13                       | 9,627,795                              | 13,098,516   | 3,470,721  | 73.5%                      |
| 01-01-15                       | 11,832,632                             | 14,456,118   | 2,623,486  | 81.9%                      |

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 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.

MUNICIPALITY OF BETHEL PARK NON-UNIFORMED 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.

MUNICIPALITY OF BETHEL PARK NON-UNIFORMED PENSION PLAN  
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION  
(UNAUDITED)

SCHEDULE OF CONTRIBUTIONS FROM EMPLOYER  
AND OTHER CONTRIBUTING ENTITIES

| Year Ended December 31 | Annual Required Contribution | Percentage Contributed |
|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| 2010                   | \$ 417,223                   | 100.0%                 |
| 2011                   | 423,513                      | 100.0%                 |
| 2012                   | 483,473                      | 100.0%                 |
| 2013                   | 567,175                      | 100.0%                 |
| 2014                   | 565,349                      | 100.0%                 |
| 2015                   | 653,896                      | 100.0%                 |

MUNICIPALITY OF BETHEL PARK NON-UNIFORMED 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, closed         |
| Remaining amortization period | 12 years                     |
| Asset valuation method        | Fair value, 4-year smoothing |
| Actuarial assumptions:        |                              |
| Investment rate of return     | 7.5%                         |
| Projected salary increases *  | 5.0%                         |

\* Includes inflation at 3.0%

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