

FORD CITY BOROUGH NONUNIFORMED PENSION PLAN

ARMSTRONG COUNTY

COMPLIANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR THE PERIOD

JANUARY 1, 2006, TO DECEMBER 31, 2008



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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.

Pension plan aid is provided from a 2 percent foreign casualty insurance premium tax, a portion of the foreign 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 Ford City Borough Nonuniformed 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 Ford City Borough Nonuniformed Pension Plan is a single-employer defined benefit pension plan locally controlled by the provisions of a resolution adopted May 17, 1989, as amended. The plan is also affected by the provisions of collective bargaining agreements between the borough and its nonuniformed employees.



The Honorable Mayor and Borough Council
Ford City Borough
Armstrong County
Ford City, PA 16226

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Ford City Borough Nonuniformed Pension Plan for the period January 1, 2006, to December 31, 2008. The audit was conducted pursuant to authority derived from Section 402(j) of Act 205 and in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* applicable to performance audits 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 finding and conclusions based on our audit objective. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our finding and 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. Ford City Borough contracted with an independent certified public accounting firm for annual audits of its basic financial statements 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 Ford City Borough Nonuniformed 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, we tested transactions, assessed official actions, performed analytical procedures and interviewed selected officials to the extent necessary to satisfy the audit objective.

The results of our tests indicated that, in all significant respects, the Ford City Borough Nonuniformed Pension Plan was administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies, except as noted in the following finding further discussed later in this report:

Finding – Inconsistent Pension Benefits

The accompanying supplementary information is presented for purposes of additional analysis. We did not audit the information and, accordingly, express no form of assurance on it.

The contents of this report were discussed with officials of Ford City Borough and, where appropriate, their responses have been included in the report.

July 23, 2009

JACK WAGNER
Auditor General

FORD CITY BOROUGH NONUNIFORMED PENSION PLAN
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – Inconsistent Pension Benefits

Condition: The pension plan’s governing document, a resolution dated May 17, 1989, as amended, contains benefit provisions that are inconsistent with the collective bargaining agreement between the nonuniformed employees and the borough, as follows:

<u>Benefit Provision</u>	<u>Governing Document</u>	<u>Collective Bargaining Agreement</u>
Normal retirement age	“Normal Retirement Age” shall mean the later of the date when an employee attains age sixty-five (65) and the date when such employee completed fifteen (15) years of service. (Section 1.19)	All full time employees with at least ten (10) years of service who retire during this agreement will be eligible for a monthly pension benefit payable at age 65. (Article XXII, Section 2 (A))
Early retirement age	Attainment of age 62 and completion of 15 years of service. (Section 1.10)	Attainment of age 62 and completion of 10 years of service. (Article XXII, Section 2 (B))
Normal retirement benefit	If a union participant retires (on or after restatement date) on his normal retirement date, he shall be entitled to receive a monthly normal retirement benefit, expressed in the normal form, commencing on his normal retirement date equal to \$11.00 multiplied by his years of service. (Section 4.01 (a))	For full time employees retiring on or after February 25, 2000, the monthly pension benefit will increase to \$21.50 per month per year of service. (Article XXII, Section 2 (A))
Disability benefit	Participant shall be eligible to receive benefits if he has completed at least ten years of service. Benefit equals \$10.50 multiplied by years of service; however, benefit shall not be less than \$125 a month. (Section 4.06 (a))	Full-time employees shall be eligible for a benefit after ten years of service. Benefit equals \$21.50 multiplied by years of service. Benefit shall not be less than \$155 per month. (Article XXII, Section 2 (C))

FORD CITY BOROUGH NONUNIFORMED PENSION PLAN
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – (Continued)

<u>Benefit Provision</u>	<u>Governing Document</u>	<u>Collective Bargaining Agreement</u>
Survivor benefit	None provided	The borough agrees to amend the pension plan to permit new retirees the option to secure a fifty (50%) percent survivor benefit in exchange for a reduced monthly pension benefit for the retiree. (Article XXII, Section 2 (A))

In addition, the actuarial valuation report for the nonuniformed pension plan with a valuation date of January 1, 2007, submitted to the Public Employee Retirement Commission, reported the benefit provisions included in the collective bargaining agreement.

Criteria: A governing document which contains clearly defined and updated benefit provisions is a prerequisite for the consistent, sound administration of retirement benefits.

Cause: Municipal officials failed to establish adequate internal control procedures to ensure the plan’s governing document and the collective bargaining agreement contained consistent benefit provisions.

Effect: Inconsistent plan documents could result in inconsistent or improper benefit calculations and incorrect benefit payments from the pension plan.

Recommendation: We recommend that municipal officials take appropriate action to ensure the plan’s governing document and the collective bargaining agreement contain consistent benefit provisions at their earliest opportunity to do so.

Management’s Response: Municipal officials agreed with the finding without exception.

FORD CITY BOROUGH NONUNIFORMED 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, except for distressed pension plans, for which annual reporting was required through January 1, 2003. The historical information, beginning as of January 1, 2003, is as follows:

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
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)	Covered Payroll (c)	Unfunded (Assets in Excess of) Actuarial Accrued Liability as a % of Payroll [(b-a)/(c)]
01-01-03	\$ 412,385	\$ 468,008	\$ 55,623	88.1%	\$ 311,145	17.9%
01-01-05	546,369	496,327	(50,042)	110.1%	311,537	(16.1%)
01-01-07	628,982	528,487	(100,495)	119.0%	291,778	(34.4%)

FORD CITY BOROUGH NONUNIFORMED 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.

Trends in unfunded (assets in excess of) actuarial accrued liability and annual covered payroll are both affected by inflation. Expressing the unfunded (assets in excess of) actuarial accrued liability as a percentage of annual covered payroll (Column 6) approximately adjusts for the effects of inflation and aids analysis of the plan's progress made in accumulating sufficient assets to pay benefits when due. Generally, where there is an unfunded actuarial accrued liability, the smaller this percentage, the stronger the plan. However, when assets are in excess of the actuarial accrued liability, the higher the bracketed percentage, the stronger the plan.

FORD CITY BOROUGH NONUNIFORMED PENSION PLAN
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
(UNAUDITED)

SCHEDULE OF CONTRIBUTIONS FROM EMPLOYER
AND OTHER CONTRIBUTING ENTITIES

Year Ended December 31	Annual Required Contribution	Percentage Contributed
2003	\$ 24,342	100.0%
2004	15,678	194.9%
2005	10,620	145.1%
2006	17,011	124.3%
2007	5,503	178.8%
2008	6,389	168.3%

FORD CITY BOROUGH NONUNIFORMED PENSION PLAN
 SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
 NOTES TO SUPPLEMENTARY SCHEDULES
 (UNAUDITED)

The information presented in the required 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, 2007
Actuarial cost method	Entry age normal
Amortization method	N/A
Remaining amortization period	N/A
Asset valuation method	Fair value
Actuarial assumptions:	
Investment rate of return *	7.5%
Projected salary increases *	None assumed
* Includes inflation at	3.0%
Cost-of-living adjustments	None assumed

FORD CITY BOROUGH NONUNIFORMED PENSION PLAN
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Edward G. Rendell
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Ford City Borough Nonuniformed Pension Plan
Armstrong County
P.O. Box 112
Ford City, PA 16226

The Honorable Marc Mantini	Mayor
Mr. John Lux	Council President
Mr. Tom Shaffer	Councilman
Ms. Lisa Bittner	Secretary

This report is a matter of public record. Copies of this report may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General, Office of Communications, Room 318 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120. If you have any questions regarding this report or any other matter, you may contact the Department of the Auditor General by accessing our website at www.auditorgen.state.pa.us.