



Pennsylvania Department of the

AUDITOR GENERAL

Facebook: Pennsylvania Auditor General

Twitter: @PaAuditorGen

News for Immediate Release

Jan. 8, 2018

Auditor General DePasquale Shares Erie Controller's Concern about Lack of Grant Oversight at Greater Erie Community Action Committee

HARRISBURG – Auditor General Eugene DePasquale today said he shares concerns raised by Erie County Controller Mary Schaaf and others about the lack of financial oversight of how the Greater Erie Community Action Committee (GECAC) spends public funds.

“It is beyond disturbing to learn that for decades Erie County has provided millions of dollars in grant funding to local organizations without asking how the money was spent,” DePasquale said. “I applaud former county council chairman Jay Breneman for uncovering what could be tens of thousands of dollars squandered on fancy banquets and meals rather than providing services to children and seniors.”

DePasquale discussed the issues last week with Controller Schaaf about how her office might dig deeper into the issues and recommend solutions.

“The relationship and rental agreement between the GECAC and Greater Erie Economic Development Corporation reminds me of the conflict of interest problems we have found when public charter schools lease their facilities from related parties,” DePasquale said. “Often one entity gets richer at the expense of the other, and the public pays the price.”

He noted that his recent audit of the Democratic National Convention Philadelphia 2016 Host Committee's financial records found a major flaw in that state contracts were being awarded with no claw-back provisions to re-coup the funding. Gov. Wolf has since required state agencies to step up efforts to include claw-back provisions in grant contracts.

“Before any funding is awarded, county officials must do a better job of establishing strict guidelines and overseeing every cent to ensure that residents are receiving the services the money was intended to provide,” DePasquale said.

“My office will continue to focus on promoting transparency and accountability of all county funds,” Schaaf said. “I appreciate the hard work and guidance from Auditor General DePasquale and I look forward to working to resolve the financial issues uncovered by former Councilman Breneman.”

Auditor General DePasquale posts all audit reports, along with his travel expenses and the agency's monthly expenses, online at: www.PaAuditor.gov.

###