

COMPLIANCE AUDIT

The Pottsville Firemen's Relief Trust Association

Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania

For the Period

January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2017

August 2018



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of the Auditor General

Eugene A. DePasquale • Auditor General



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

EUGENE A. DePASQUALE
AUDITOR GENERAL

Mr. John M. Messner, Jr., President
The Pottsville Firemen's Relief
Trust Association
Schuylkill County

We have conducted a compliance audit of The Pottsville Firemen's Relief Trust Association (relief association) pursuant to authority derived from Article VIII, Section 10 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Section 403 of The Fiscal Code, Act of April 9, 1929, (P.L. 343, No. 176), and mandated by the Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Act, as consolidated by the Act of November 23, 2010 (P.L. 1181, No. 118), at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7411 *et seq.*, for the period January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2017.

The objectives of the audit were:

1. To determine if the relief association took appropriate corrective action to address the findings contained in our prior audit report.
2. To determine if the relief association complied with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures as they relate to the receipt of state aid and the expenditure of relief association funds.

Our audit was limited to the areas related to the objectives identified above and was not required to be and was not conducted in accordance with Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

Relief association officers are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the relief association's administration of state aid and accumulated relief funds complies with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures, including the safeguarding of assets. Relief association officers are responsible for complying with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures. It is our responsibility to perform procedures to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to the extent necessary to satisfy the audit objectives. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our conclusions.


Based on our audit procedures, we conclude that, for the period January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2017:

- The relief association took appropriate corrective action to address the findings contained in our prior audit report.
- The relief association, in all significant respects, complied with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures as they relate to the receipt of state aid and the expenditure of relief association funds.

The supplementary financial information contained in this report is presented for purposes of additional disclosure and analysis. We performed only limited procedures on the supplementary financial information and, accordingly, express no form of assurance on it.

The contents of this report were discussed with the management of the relief association. We would like to thank the relief association officials for the cooperation extended to us during the conduct of the audit.

August 13, 2018


EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE
Auditor General

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BACKGROUND

Pursuant to Article VIII, Section 10 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Section 403 of The Fiscal Code, Act of April 9, 1929, (P.L. 343, No. 176), and the Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Act, as consolidated by the Act of November 23, 2010, (P.L. 1181, No. 118), at 35 Pa.C.S. § 7411 *et seq.*, the Department of the Auditor General's duty is to audit the accounts and records of every volunteer firefighters' relief association to determine that funds received under the Foreign Fire Insurance Tax Distribution Law, Act of December 18, 1984, (P.L. 1005, No. 205), as amended, 53 P.S. § 895.701 *et seq.* (commonly referred to as Act 205), are properly expended.

The relief association is a charitable organization that was formed primarily to afford financial protection to volunteer firefighters and to encourage individuals to participate in volunteer fire service.

Act 118 governs the overall operation of volunteer firefighters' relief associations. Relief association bylaws define the specific operational procedures by which relief associations conduct business. To fulfill its primary purpose, Act 118 authorizes specific types of expenditures and prescribes appropriate volunteer firefighters' relief association investment options. Within the parameters established by Act 118, it is the responsibility of relief associations to choose investments in a proper and prudent manner.

Volunteer firefighters' relief associations receive public tax monies, and the association officers therefore have a responsibility to the public to conduct the association's financial affairs in a businesslike manner and to maintain sufficient financial records to support the propriety of all association transactions. Volunteer firefighters' relief association officers are also responsible for ensuring that the association operates in accordance with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws and administrative procedures.

Act 205 sets forth the computation of the Foreign Fire Insurance Tax Distribution paid to each applicable municipality throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The amount of the distribution is based upon the population of each municipality and the market value of real estate within the municipality. Upon receipt of this distribution, the municipality must allocate the funds to the volunteer firefighters' relief association of the fire service organization or fire service organizations that is or are recognized as providing the service to the municipality.

BACKGROUND – (Continued)

The relief association was allocated state aid from the following municipalities:

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>
North Manheim Township	Schuylkill	\$ 4,744	\$ 4,395
Pottsville City	Schuylkill	\$65,494	\$59,617

The volunteer firefighters’ relief association and the affiliated fire service organizations are separate, legal entities. The relief association is affiliated with the following fire service organizations:

- American Hose Company No. 2
- Good Intent Fire Company No. 1
- Good Will Fire Company No. 4
- Humane Fire Company No. 1
- Phoenix Fire Engine Company No. 2
- West End Hose Company No. 7
- Yorkville Hose and Fire Company No. 1

THE POTTSVILLE FIREMEN'S RELIEF TRUST ASSOCIATION
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDINGS

COMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The relief association has complied with the prior audit findings and recommendations, as follows:

- Failure To Maintain Surety (Fidelity) Bond Coverage

By maintaining Surety (Fidelity) bond coverage in an amount greater than the balance of the relief association's cash assets.

- Unauthorized Expenditures

By receiving reimbursement of \$13,300 from the affiliated fire company for the unauthorized expenditures made in the prior audit period.

- Untimely Deposit Of State Aid

By timely depositing all income received.

We commend the relief association management for its efforts in complying with the findings and recommendations contained in the prior audit report. The association management should strive to remain in compliance with all applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws and administrative procedures.

THE POTTSVILLE FIREMEN'S RELIEF TRUST ASSOCIATION
SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION
CASH AND INVESTMENT BALANCES
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2017

Cash	\$ 32,153
Fair Value of Investments	761,223
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Total Cash and Investments	<u>\$ 793,376</u>

THE POTTSVILLE FIREMEN'S RELIEF TRUST ASSOCIATION
 SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION
 SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES
 FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2016 TO DECEMBER 31, 2017

Expenditures:

Benefit Services:	
Insurance premiums	\$ 7,540
Death benefits	82,000
Relief benefits	270
Total Benefit Services	\$ 89,810
Fire Services:	
Equipment purchased	\$ 492,847
Equipment maintenance	5,555
Training expenses	4,191
Total Fire Services	\$ 502,593
Administrative Services:	
Officer compensation	\$ 6,000
Other administrative expenses	13,172
Bond premiums	644
Total Administrative Services	\$ 19,816
Total Investments Purchased	\$ 153,846
Other Expenditures:	
Payments on loan	\$ 42,324
Total Expenditures	\$ 808,389

THE POTTSVILLE FIREMEN'S RELIEF TRUST ASSOCIATION
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom W. Wolf
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

The Pottsville Firemen's Relief Trust Association Governing Body:

Mr. John M. Messner, Jr.
President

Mr. Jason G. Witmier
Vice President

Mr. Gary Witmier
Secretary

Mr. Joseph F. Spotts, III
Treasurer

Mr. Kurt Shelhamer
Trustee

Mr. Charles Bauers
Trustee

Mr. Kevin Sibbett
Trustee

The following municipalities allocated foreign fire insurance tax monies to this relief association and received a copy of this report:

Ms. Barbara G. Miller
Secretary
North Manheim Township

Ms. Lisa M. Kral
Secretary
Pottsville City

THE POTTSVILLE FIREMEN'S RELIEF TRUST ASSOCIATION
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report is a matter of public record and is available online at www.PaAuditor.gov. Media questions about the report can be directed to the Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General, Office of Communications, 229 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120; via email to: news@PaAuditor.gov.