

# COMPLIANCE AUDIT

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## City of Meadville Firemen's Pension Fund Crawford County, Pennsylvania For the Period January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020

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July 2021



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Department of the Auditor General

Timothy L. DeFoor • Auditor General



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

**TIMOTHY L. DEFOOR  
AUDITOR GENERAL**

The Honorable Mayor and City Council  
City of Meadville  
Crawford County  
Meadville, PA 16335

We have conducted a compliance audit of the City of Meadville Firemen's Pension Fund for the period January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020. We also evaluated compliance with some requirements subsequent to that period when possible. The audit was conducted pursuant to authority derived from the Municipal Pension Plan Funding Standard and Recovery Act (Act 205 of 1984, as amended, 53 P.S. § 895.402(j)), which requires the Auditor General, as deemed necessary, to audit every municipality which receives general municipal pension system state aid and every municipal pension plan and fund in which general municipal pension system state aid is deposited. The audit was not conducted, nor was it required to be, in accordance with Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. We planned and performed 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 fund 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 fund 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 fund as evidenced by supporting documentation. Employer contributions that were deposited into the pension fund for the defined contribution features of the pension fund for the years ended December 31, 2019 to December 31, 2020, are presented on the Summary of Deposited State Aid and Employer Contributions.
- We determined whether annual employee contributions were calculated, deducted, and deposited into the pension fund 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 fund. For the defined contribution features of the pension fund, we also tested individual employee contributions for all 3 active employees employed during the year 2019, amounting to \$5,672, and all 4 employees employed during the year 2020, amounting to \$7,585.
- We determined whether retirement benefits calculated for plan members who retired during the current audit period, and through the completion of our fieldwork procedures, (under the defined benefit features of the pension fund) 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 benefits due to the retired individuals and comparing these amounts to supporting documentation evidencing amounts determined and actually paid to the recipients.
- We determined whether the January 1, 2019 actuarial valuation report was prepared and submitted by March 31, 2020, in accordance with Act 205 and whether selected information provided on this report 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 all annual special ad hoc postretirement reimbursements received by the municipality were authorized and appropriately deposited in accordance with Act 147 by tracing information to supporting documentation maintained by plan officials.

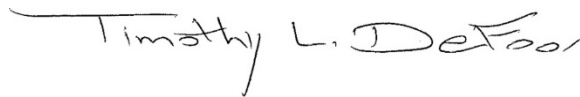
City officials are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the City of Meadville Firemen's Pension Fund is administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies. As previously described, we tested transactions, interviewed selected

officials, and performed procedures to the extent necessary 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 City of Meadville Firemen's Pension Fund 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 City of Meadville and, where appropriate, their responses have been included in the report. We would like to thank city officials for the cooperation extended to us during the conduct of the audit.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy L. DeFoor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the left of the first letter.

Timothy L. DeFoor  
Auditor General

July 22, 2021

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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.

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 City of Meadville Firemen's Pension Fund is also governed by implementing regulations 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 399 - Optional Third Class City Charter Law, Act of July 15, 1957 (P.L. 901, No. 399), as amended, 53 P.S. § 41101 et seq.

The City of Meadville Firemen's Pension Fund is a single-employer defined benefit pension plan locally controlled by the provisions of Article 161 of the city's codified ordinances, adopted pursuant to Act 399 with defined benefit provisions for all fire employees hired by November 27, 2017 and includes defined contribution features for those fire employees (including those collectively bargained) hired after November 27, 2017. The pension fund is also affected by the provisions of collective bargaining agreements between the city and its firefighters. The plan was established May 25, 1954. Active participants, hired prior to November 27, 2017, and subject to the defined benefit provisions of the fund, are required to contribute 5 percent of base salary to the pension fund. For active participants hired after November 27, 2017 (including those collectively bargained) and subject to the defined contribution features of the pension fund, participants are also required to contribute 5 percent of base salary into the fund. The city is required to contribute 7 percent of base salary. As of December 31, 2020, the fund had 13 total active members (9 defined benefit, 4 defined contribution), no terminated members eligible for vested benefits in the future, and 23 retirees receiving pension benefits.

CITY OF MEADVILLE FIREMEN'S PENSION FUND  
(DEFINED BENEFIT)  
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, 2015, 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)
01-01-15	\$ 6,214,310	\$ 6,575,704	\$ 361,394	94.5%
01-01-17	6,638,186	6,999,688	361,502	94.8%
01-01-19	6,760,175	7,541,986	781,811	89.6%

Note: The market values of the plan's assets at 01-01-15, 01-01-17, and 01-01-19 have been adjusted to reflect the smoothing of gains and/or losses subject to a corridor between 80 and 120 percent of the market value of assets. 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.

CITY OF MEADVILLE FIREMEN'S PENSION FUND  
(DEFINED BENEFIT)  
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.



CITY OF MEADVILLE FIREMEN'S PENSION FUND  
(DEFINED BENEFIT)  
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION  
(UNAUDITED)

SCHEDULE OF CONTRIBUTIONS

Year Ended December 31	Actuarially Determined Contribution	Actual Contributions	Contribution Deficiency (Excess)	Covered- Employee Payroll*	Contributions as a Percentage of Covered- Employee Payroll
2011	\$ 107,838	\$ 107,838	\$ -	\$ 853,000	12.64%
2012	112,409	112,409	-	865,000	13.00%
2013	114,053	114,053	-	925,000	12.33%
2014	118,773	118,773	-	907,000	13.10%
2015	195,785	175,309	20,476**	866,000	20.24%
2016	192,414	171,938	20,476**	733,000	23.46%
2017	135,662	135,662	-	725,000	18.71%
2018	134,543	134,543	-	717,000	18.76%
2019	125,849	125,849	-		
2020	192,087	192,087	-		

\* Due to the timing of this audit, covered-employee payroll for 2019 and 2020 was not provided in this schedule.

\*\* As a Level 1 Distressed Municipality, the City elected the amortization contribution reduction remedy whereby the city was authorized to deposit less than the full minimum municipal obligation (MMO) for the years 2015 and 2016 in accordance with Act 205.

CITY OF MEADVILLE FIREMEN'S PENSION FUND  
(DEFINED BENEFIT)  
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, 2019
Actuarial cost method	Entry age normal
Amortization method	Level dollar
Remaining amortization period	10 years
Asset valuation method	Plan assets are valued using the method described in Section 210 of Act 205, as amended, subject to a corridor between 80-120% of the market value of assets.
Actuarial assumptions:	
Investment rate of return	7.50%
Projected salary increases *	3.25%
Cost-of-living adjustments	None assumed

\* Includes inflation at 2.50%

CITY OF MEADVILLE FIREMEN'S PENSION FUND  
 (DEFINED CONTRIBUTION FEATURES)  
 SUMMARY OF DEPOSITED STATE AID AND EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTIONS

Year Ended December 31	State Aid	Employer Contributions
2019	None	\$ 7,941
2020	None	10,619

The Department typically presents this data for the past six consecutive fiscal years. Since six years of data were not yet available, this will be done prospectively.

CITY OF MEADVILLE FIREMEN'S PENSION FUND  
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

**The Honorable Tom W. Wolf**  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

**The Honorable H. LeRoy Stearns**  
Mayor

**Mr. Larry McKnight**  
Deputy Mayor

**Mr. Gary Johnson**  
Interim City Manager

**Mr. Timothy Groves**  
Finance Director

**Ms. Rosemarie M. Groves**  
City Controller

**Ms. M. Michelle Sampson**  
City Treasurer

**Mr. Sean P. Donahue**  
Council Member

**Mr. James Roha**  
Council Member

**Ms. Autumn Vogel**  
Council Member

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