

COMPLIANCE AUDIT

Tamaqua Borough Police Pension Plan Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania For the Period January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2017

March 2019



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
Twitter: @PAAuditorGen
www.PaAuditor.gov

EUGENE A. DePASQUALE
AUDITOR GENERAL

The Honorable Mayor and Borough Council
Tamaqua Borough
Schuylkill County
Tamaqua, PA 18252

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Tamaqua Borough Police Pension Plan for the period January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2017. 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 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 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. 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 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 plan.
- We determined whether retirement benefits calculated for the plan member who retired during the current audit period, 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 retired individuals and comparing these amounts to supporting documentation evidencing amounts determined and actually paid to recipients.
- We determined whether January 1, 2015 and January 1, 2017 actuarial valuation reports were prepared and submitted by March 31, 2016 and 2018, 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.
- We determined whether the terms of the plan's unallocated insurance contract, including ownership and any restrictions, were in compliance with plan provisions, investment policies, and state regulations by comparing the terms of the contract with the plan's provisions, investment policies, and state regulations.
- We determined whether transfers were properly authorized, timely, and appropriately recorded by plan officials by examining supporting documentation for one of the transfers made during the audit period.
- We determined whether provisions of the Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) were in accordance with the provisions of Act 205 by examining provisions stated in the plan's governing documents.

Tamaqua Borough contracted with an independent certified public accounting firm for annual audits of its general purpose 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 Tamaqua Borough Police 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 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 objective.


The results of our procedures indicated that, in all significant respects, the Tamaqua Borough Police 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. However, we are extremely concerned about the funded status of the plan contained in the schedule of funding progress included in this report which indicates the **plan's funded ratio is 60.0% as of January 1, 2017**, which is the most recent data available. We encourage borough officials to monitor the funding of the police pension plan to ensure its long-term financial stability.

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 Tamaqua Borough and, where appropriate, their responses have been included in the report. We would like to thank borough officials for the cooperation extended to us during the conduct of the audit.

March 4, 2019


EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE
Auditor General

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Background.....	1
Supplementary Information	3
Report Distribution List	10

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 Tamaqua Borough Police Pension Plan is also governed by implementing regulations adopted by the former Public Employee Retirement Commission 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 600 - Police Pension Fund Act, Act of May 29, 1956 (P.L. 1804, No. 600), as amended, 53 P.S. § 767 et seq.

The Tamaqua Borough Police Pension Plan is a single-employer defined benefit pension plan locally controlled by the provisions of Ordinance No. 413, as amended, adopted pursuant to Act 600. The plan is also affected by the provisions of collective bargaining agreements between the borough and its police officers. The plan was established December 11, 1945. Active members are required to contribute 8 percent of compensation to the plan. As of December 31, 2017, the plan had 6 active members, no terminated members eligible for vested benefits in the future, and 12 retirees receiving pension benefits from the plan.

BACKGROUND – (Continued)

As of December 31, 2017, selected plan benefit provisions are as follows:

Eligibility Requirements:

Normal Retirement Age 50 and 25 years of service

Early Retirement 20 years of service

Vesting 100% after 12 years of service

Retirement Benefit:

Benefit equal to 50% of final 36 months average salary, plus a service increment of \$100 per month for each year of service in excess of 25 years, up to a maximum of \$500 per month.

Survivor Benefit:

Before Retirement Eligibility Refund of member contributions plus interest.

After Retirement Eligibility A monthly benefit equal to 50% of the pension the member was receiving or was entitled to receive on the day of the member's death.

Service Related Disability Benefit:

Benefit equal to 75% (hired prior to January 1, 2013) and 50% (hired after January 1, 2013) of the member's salary at the time the disability was incurred, offset by Social Security disability benefits received for the same injury.

TAMAQUA BOROUGH POLICE PENSION PLAN
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
(UNAUDITED)

The supplementary information contained on Pages 3 through 5 reflects 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, 2014 AND 2015

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>
Total Pension Liability		
Service cost	\$ 74,725	\$ 65,127
Interest	280,435	279,772
Difference between expected and actual experience	-	(125,377)
Changes of assumptions	-	-
Benefit payments, including refunds of member contributions	(229,023)	(229,023)
Net Change in Total Pension Liability	<u>126,137</u>	<u>(9,501)</u>
Total Pension Liability – Beginning	<u>3,778,919</u>	<u>3,905,056</u>
Total Pension Liability – Ending (a)	<u>\$ 3,905,056</u>	<u>\$ 3,895,555</u>
Plan Fiduciary Net Position		
Contributions – state aid	\$ 113,088	\$ 119,499
Contributions – Employer	111,095	144,436
Contributions – member	31,843	30,906
Net investment income	52,514	(71,786)
Benefit payments, including refunds of member contributions	(229,023)	(229,023)
Administrative expense	(1,188)	(2,087)
Net Change in Plan Fiduciary Net Position	<u>78,329</u>	<u>(8,055)</u>
Plan Fiduciary Net Position – Beginning	<u>2,261,490</u>	<u>2,339,819</u>
Plan Fiduciary Net Position – Ending (b)	<u>\$ 2,339,819</u>	<u>\$ 2,331,764</u>
Net Pension Liability – Ending (a-b)	<u>\$ 1,565,237</u>	<u>\$ 1,563,791</u>
Plan Fiduciary Net Position as a Percentage of the Total Pension Liability	59.9%	59.86%
Estimated Covered Employee Payroll	\$ 375,976	\$ 394,675
Net Pension Liability as a Percentage of Covered Employee Payroll	416.3%	396.22%

TAMAQUA BOROUGH POLICE PENSION PLAN
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
(UNAUDITED)

SCHEDULE OF CHANGES IN THE NET PENSION
LIABILITY AND RELATED RATIOS
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2016 AND 2017

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>
Total Pension Liability		
Service cost	\$ 68,058	\$ 45,696
Interest	288,683	296,213
Differences between expected and actual experience	-	(51,923)
Changes of assumptions	-	181,204
Benefit payments, including refunds of member contributions	<u>(229,023)</u>	<u>(225,114)</u>
Net Change in Total Pension Liability	127,718	246,076
Total Pension Liability – Beginning	<u>3,895,555</u>	<u>4,023,273</u>
Total Pension Liability – Ending (a)	<u>\$ 4,023,273</u>	<u>\$ 4,269,349</u>
Plan Fiduciary Net Position		
Contributions – state aid	\$ 158,656	\$ 114,865
Contributions – employer	104,552	160,247
Contributions – member	24,596	32,251
Net investment income	100,881	396,203
Benefit payments, including refunds of member contributions	<u>(229,023)</u>	<u>(225,114)</u>
Administrative expense	<u>(196)</u>	<u>(804)</u>
Net Change in Plan Fiduciary Net Position	159,466	477,648
Plan Fiduciary Net Position – Beginning	<u>2,331,764</u>	<u>2,491,230</u>
Plan Fiduciary Net Position – Ending (b)	<u>\$ 2,491,230</u>	<u>\$ 2,968,878</u>
Net Pension Liability – Ending (a-b)	<u>\$ 1,532,043</u>	<u>\$ 1,300,471</u>
Plan Fiduciary Net Position as a Percentage of the Total Pension Liability	61.92%	69.54%
Estimated Covered Employee Payroll	\$ 382,362	\$ 264,669
Net Pension Liability as a Percentage of Covered Employee Payroll	400.68%	491.36%

TAMAQUA BOROUGH POLICE 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 borough as of December 31, 2017, calculated using the discount rate of 7.25%, as well as what the borough'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 (6.25%)	Current Discount Rate (7.25%)	1% Increase (8.25%)
Net Pension Liability – 12/31/17	\$ 1,704,321	\$ 1,300,471	\$ 957,625

In addition, the following presents the net pension liability of the borough as of December 31, 2016 and 2015, calculated using the discount rate of 7.50%, as well as what the borough'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 (6.50%)	Current Discount Rate (7.50%)	1% Increase (8.50%)
Net Pension Liability – 12/31/16	\$ 1,915,648	\$ 1,532,043	\$ 1,205,962
Net Pension Liability – 12/31/15	\$ 1,943,529	\$ 1,563,791	\$ 1,240,814

SCHEDULE OF INVESTMENT RETURNS

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

2017	16.39%
2016	4.43%
2015	(3.17%)
2014	3.25%

TAMAQUA BOROUGH POLICE 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, 2013, 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)
01-01-13	\$ 2,081,279	\$ 3,662,965	\$ 1,581,686	56.8%
01-01-15	2,339,819	3,779,679	1,439,860	61.9%
01-01-17	2,491,230	4,152,554	1,661,324	60.0%

TAMAQUA BOROUGH POLICE 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.

TAMAQUA BOROUGH POLICE PENSION PLAN
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
(UNAUDITED)

SCHEDULE OF CONTRIBUTIONS FROM EMPLOYER
AND OTHER CONTRIBUTING ENTITIES

Year Ended December 31	Annual Required Contribution	Percentage Contributed
2012	\$ 183,627	100.0%
2013	234,163	100.0%
2014	224,183	100.0%
2015	263,935	100.1%
2016	263,208	100.0%
2017	275,112	100.0%

TAMAQUA BOROUGH POLICE 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, 2017
Actuarial cost method	Entry age normal
Amortization method	Level dollar
Remaining amortization period	8 years
Asset valuation method	Fair value
Actuarial assumptions:	
Investment rate of return	7.25%
Projected salary increases	4.25%

TAMAQUA BOROUGH POLICE PENSION PLAN
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom W. Wolf
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

The Honorable Nathan Gerace
Mayor

Mr. David Mace
Council President

Mr. Brian Connely
Council Vice-President

Mr. Tom Cara
Council Member

Mr. Ronald Bowman
Council Member

Mr. Robert Amentler
Council Member

Mr. Ritchie Linkhorst
Council Member

Ms. Mary Linkevich
Council Member

Mr. Kevin Steigerwalt
Borough Manager

Ms. Georgia Depos DeWire
Borough Secretary

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.