

TOWNSHIP OF FISHING CREEK COLUMBIA COUNTY 19-207

LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND EXAMINATION REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2009

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TOWNSHIP OF FISHING CREEK COLUMBIA COUNTY LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND BACKGROUND FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2009

Background

The Liquid Fuels Tax Municipal Allocation Law, Title 72 P.S. § 2615.5, provides municipalities other than counties (townships, boroughs, cities, towns, home rule, and optional plan governments) with an annual allocation of liquid fuels taxes from the state's Motor License Fund to be used for the maintenance and repair of streets, roads, and bridges for which the municipality is responsible. The allocation of these funds to municipalities is based: (1) 50 percent on the municipality's proportion of local road mileage to the total local road mileage in the state, and (2) 50 percent on the proportion of a municipality's population to the total population in the state.

The Vehicle Code, Title 75 P.S. § 9511, provides municipalities with annual maintenance payments to be received from the Motor License Fund for functionally local highways that were transferred to a municipality from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Each municipality must deposit the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund money and annual maintenance payments that it receives into a special fund called the Municipal Liquid Fuels Tax Fund or State Fund. A municipality may not deposit any other monies into this fund except when the municipality does not have enough money in the special fund to meet the payments called for by its current annual budget for road and bridge purposes. In this case, the municipality may borrow money or transfer money from its General Fund to its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund.

The Department of Transportation has been given the regulatory authority for the administration of these funds. To qualify for its annual allocation, each municipality shall submit the following documents and information to the Department of Transportation:

- 1. Evidence that the treasurer is bonded in accordance with the law, or that its treasurer is a bank requiring no bond by January 31 of each year.
- 2. A report indicating the manner in which its liquid fuels tax allocation was expended in the previous year (Form MS-965) by January 31 of each year.
- 3. A report of elected and appointed officials by January 31 of each year.
- 4. A Survey of Financial Condition by March 15 of each year.

Department of Transportation *Publication 9* contains the policies and procedures that govern the use of Liquid Fuels Tax Fund money. However, if there is a difference between *Publication 9* and any legislation, the legislation shall govern.





Department of the Auditor General Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120-0018

JACK WAGNER AUDITOR GENERAL

Independent Auditor's Report

The Honorable Barry J. Schoch, P.E. Secretary Department of Transportation Harrisburg, PA 17120

We examined the accompanying Form MS-965 With Adjustments for the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund of the Township of Fishing Creek, Columbia County, for the year ended December 31, 2009. The municipality's management is responsible for the Form MS-965. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the Form MS-965 With Adjustments based on our examination.

Our examination was conducted in accordance with attestation standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the standards applicable to attestation engagements contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. An examination includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the Township of Fishing Creek, Columbia County's Form MS-965 for the year ended December 31, 2009 and performing such other procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances. We believe that our examination provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

We are mandated by Section 403 of *The Fiscal Code*, 72 P.S. § 403, to audit each municipality's Liquid Fuels Tax Fund to ensure that funds received are expended in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States include attestation engagements as a separate type of audit. An attestation engagement performed pursuant to *Government Auditing Standards* involves additional standards that exceed the standards provided by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Accordingly, this attestation engagement complies with both *Government Auditing Standards* and Section 403 of *The Fiscal Code*.

As described in Note 4, the adjustments included on the Form MS-965 With Adjustments are made by the Department of the Auditor General.

Independent Auditor's Report (Continued)

In our opinion the Form MS-965 With Adjustments presents, in all material respects, the information required by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation for the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund of the Township of Fishing Creek, Columbia County, for the year ended December 31, 2009, in conformity with the criteria set forth in Note 1.

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we are required to report findings of significant deficiencies in internal control, violations of provisions of contracts or grant agreements, and abuse that are material to the Form MS-965 and any fraud and illegal acts that are more than inconsequential that come to our attention during our examination. We are also required to obtain the views of management on those matters. We performed our examination to express an opinion on whether the Form MS-965 are presented in accordance with the criteria described above and not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the internal control over reporting on the Form MS-965 or on compliance and other matters; accordingly, we express no such opinions.

A control deficiency exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent or detect misstatements on a timely basis. A significant deficiency is a control deficiency, or combination of control deficiencies, that adversely affects the Township of Fishing Creek, Columbia County's ability to initiate, authorize, record, process, or report data reliably in accordance with the applicable criteria such that there is more than a remote likelihood that a misstatement of the Township of Fishing Creek, Columbia County's Form MS-965 that is more than inconsequential will not be prevented or detected by the Township of Fishing Creek, Columbia County's internal control. We consider the deficiencies described in the findings below to be significant deficiencies in internal control over reporting on the Form MS-965:

- Failure To Properly Prepare Form MS-965.
- Documentation Supporting Payroll Expenditures Was Not Available For Examination.

Independent Auditor's Report (Continued)

A material weakness is a significant deficiency or combination of significant deficiencies that results in more than a remote likelihood that a material misstatement of the Form MS-965 will not be prevented or detected by the Township of Fishing Creek, Columbia County's internal control. Our consideration of the internal control over reporting on the Form MS-965 would not necessarily disclose all matters in the internal control that might be significant deficiencies and, accordingly, would not necessarily disclose all significant deficiencies that are also considered to be material weaknesses. We consider the first bulleted deficiency described above to be a material weakness.

The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

We are concerned in light of the municipality's failure to correct a previously reported finding regarding documentation supporting payroll expenditures. The municipality should strive to implement the recommendations and corrective actions noted in this report.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and the management of the Township of Fishing Creek, Columbia County, and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

March 15, 2011

JACK WAGNER Auditor General



TOWNSHIP OF FISHING CREEK COLUMBIA COUNTY LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND 2009 FORM MS-965 – SECTION 1 WITH ADJUSTMENTS

Expenditure Summary	Reported		Adjustments (Note 4)		Adjusted Amount	
Major equipment purchases	\$	32,308.07	\$	-	\$	32,308.07
Minor equipment purchases		-		-		-
Computer/Computer related training		-		-		-
Agility projects		-		-		-
Cleaning streets and gutters		-		-		-
Winter maintenance services		19,393.83		(6,448.29)		12,945.54
Traffic control devices		-		-		-
Street lighting		-		-		-
Storm sewers and drains		-		-		-
Repairs of tools and machinery		4,187.33		1,440.46		5,627.79
Maintenance and repair of						
roads and bridges		85,496.65		4,886.01		90,382.66
Highway construction and						
rebuilding projects		18,413.09		-		18,413.09
Miscellaneous (Bank service charges)		-		12.00		12.00
Total (To Section 2, Line 5)	\$	159,798.97	\$	(109.82)	\$	159,689.15

Notes to Form MS-965 With Adjustments are an integral part of this report.

TOWNSHIP OF FISHING CREEK COLUMBIA COUNTY LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND 2009 FORM MS-965 – SECTION 2 WITH ADJUSTMENTS

Fund Balance	Reported		Adjustments (Note 4)		Adjusted Amount	
1. Balance, January 1, 2009	\$	33,313.32	\$	-	\$	33,313.32
Receipts:						
2. State allocation		127,559.26		-		127,559.26
2a. Turnback allocation		24,720.00		-		24,720.00
2b. Interest on investments (Note 3)		816.03		-		816.03
2c. Miscellaneous (Note 5)		3,045.84		(260.84)		2,785.00
3. Total receipts		156,141.13		(260.84)		155,880.29
4. Total funds available		189,454.45		(260.84)		189,193.61
5. Expenditures (Section 1)		159,798.97		(109.82)		159,689.15
6. Balance, December 31, 2009	\$	29,655.48	\$	(151.02)	\$	29,504.46

Notes to Form MS-965 With Adjustments are an integral part of this report.

TOWNSHIP OF FISHING CREEK COLUMBIA COUNTY LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND 2009 FORM MS-965 – SECTION 3 WITH ADJUSTMENTS

Equipment Balance	Reported		Adjustments (Note 4)		Adjusted Amount	
1. Prior year equipment balance	\$	31,777.51	\$	-	\$	31,777.51
2. Add: Current year equipment allocation (20% of Lines 2 + 2a, Section 2)	n	30,455.85		-		30,455.85
3. PENNDOT approved adjustments				2,785.00		2,785.00
4. Total funds available for equipment acquisition		62,233.36		2,785.00		65,018.36
5. Less: Major equipment expenditures		32,308.07				32,308.07
6. Remainder		29,925.29		2,785.00		32,710.29
 Equipment balance available for subsequent year (Lesser of Line 6 or Section 2 balance, but not less than zero) 	\$	29,655.48	\$	(151.02)	\$	29,504.46

Notes to Form MS-965 With Adjustments are an integral part of this report.

1. <u>Criteria</u>

Section 1

This section of Form MS-965 With Adjustments provides a summary of Liquid Fuels Tax Fund expenditures by category. Categories requiring explanation include:

- Major equipment purchases are purchases of road machinery and road equipment that cost in excess of \$4,000.00.
- Minor equipment purchases are purchases of road machinery and road equipment that cost \$4,000.00 or less.
- Agility projects are exchanges of services with the Department of Transportation.

Section 2

This section of Form MS-965 With Adjustments provides information on the fund balance. Categories requiring explanation include:

- The state allocation is generally received from the Department of Transportation during the first week in April of each year. The amount the municipality receives is based half on its population and half on its road mileage.
- The turnback allocation is generally received from the Department of Transportation during the first week in April of each year. A municipality receives a yearly turnback allocation based on road mileage for all roads that were transferred to the municipality from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania through the Highway Transfer Program.
- Expenditures include the total transferred from Section 1.

Section 3

This section of Form MS-965 With Adjustments determines if the municipality expended Liquid Fuels Tax Fund money in excess of the permissible amount for equipment and the balance that the municipality may carry forward for the purchase of equipment to the subsequent year.

1. <u>Criteria (Continued)</u>

Section 3 (Continued)

Department of Transportation *Publication 9* requires that the amount expended for equipment purchases in a given year not exceed the sum of the equipment balance carried forward from the previous year and 20 percent of the current year's Liquid Fuels Tax Fund allocation and, if applicable, 20 percent of the turnback allocation plus other Department of Transportation approved adjustments.

If the municipality spent in excess of the amount listed on Line 4, the excess must be reimbursed to the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund.

The equipment balance to be carried forward for the subsequent year is the lesser of the amount on Line 6 or the ending fund balance on Line 6 of Section 2, but not less than zero.

Basis Of Presentation

The financial activities of the municipality are accounted for in separate funds. The Liquid Fuels Tax Fund is used to account for state aid revenues from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation used primarily for building and improving local roads and bridges. The Form MS-965 has been prepared in accordance with reporting requirements prescribed by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation as a result of the Fuels Tax Act 655, dated 1956 and as amended, which does not constitute a complete presentation of the entity's assets, liabilities, expenses, and fund balance. Accordingly, the presentation of Form MS-965 With Adjustments is restricted to the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund, which represents a segment of the entity.

Basis Of Accounting

The accompanying Form MS-965 With Adjustments is prepared in accordance with reporting requirements prescribed by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. Under this method, revenues are recognized when received and expenditures are recorded when paid.

1. <u>Criteria (Continued)</u>

General Fixed Assets

General fixed assets are recognized as expenditures at the time of purchase. No depreciation has been provided on the heavy equipment used to maintain and repair roads and bridges.

2. <u>Deposits</u>

The Second Class Township Code, Title 53 P.S. § 68204, authorizes the township to deposit its funds in the following:

- Deposits in savings accounts or time deposits, other than certificates of deposit or share accounts of institutions having their principal place of business in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) or other like insurance. For any amount above the insured maximum, the depository shall pledge approved collateral.
- Certificates of deposit purchased from institutions insured by the FDIC or other like insurance to the extent that such accounts are so insured. For any amounts in excess of the insured maximum, such deposits shall be collateralized by a pledge or assignment of assets. Certificates of deposit may not exceed 20 percent of a bank's total capital surplus or 20 percent of a savings and loan's or savings bank's assets minus liabilities.

Deposits consist of receipts and deposits in a financial institution. Pennsylvania statutes require all deposits to be insured and, for any amount above the insured maximum, to be secured with approved collateral as defined.

There were no deposits exposed to custodial credit risk as of December 31, 2009. Custodial credit risk, as defined by GASB No. 40, includes deposits that are not covered by depository insurance and the deposits are uncollateralized, collateralized with securities held by the pledging financial institution, or collateralized with securities held by the pledging financial institution's trust department or agent but not in the municipality's name.

2. Deposits (Continued)

Fund Balance

The fund balance consists of the following:

Cash

\$29,504.46

3. Interest On Investments

Our examination disclosed that the municipality deposited idle liquid fuels tax money in an interest-bearing account which earned \$816.03 during 2009, thus providing additional funds for road maintenance and repairs.

4. Adjustments

Section 1

An adjustment of \$(6,448.29) was made to "Winter maintenance services" because transfers totaling \$11,700.00 between two Liquid Fuels Tax Fund accounts were incorrectly reported as expenditures and check Nos. 6683 for \$1,197.74, 6684 for \$878.74, 6690 for \$2,377.30, and 6693 for \$797.93 were not reported.

An adjustment of \$1,440.46 was made to "Repairs of tools and machinery" because check Nos. 6682 for \$93.60, 6685 for \$79.50, 6686 for \$526.29, 6687 for \$17.10, 6688 for \$74.97, and 6689 for \$649.00 were not reported.

An adjustment of \$4,886.01 was made to "Maintenance and repair of roads and bridges" because check Nos. 6681 for \$1,460.03, 6691 for \$1,715.19, 6692 for \$942.90, and 6694 for \$767.89 were not reported.

An adjustment was of \$12.00 made to "Miscellaneous" expenditures because bank service charges were not reported.

Section 2

An adjustment of \$(260.84) was made to "Miscellaneous" because a transfer between two Liquid Fuels Tax Fund accounts was incorrectly reported as a receipt.

4. Adjustments (Continued)

Section 3

An adjustment of \$2,785.00 was made to "PENNDOT approved adjustments" because the proceeds from the sale of a chipper were not reported as an approved adjustment.

5. <u>Miscellaneous Receipts</u>

During our examination the municipality deposited \$2,000.00 on June 17, 2009 and \$785.00 on July 8, 2009 into its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund which was received from a local business for the sale of a chipper.

6. <u>Bank Loan</u>

On December 8, 2004, the municipality borrowed \$109,643.00 from First Columbia Bank and Trust Company to purchase a new 2005 Sterling truck with attachments for \$89,643.00 and to pay off a loan balance of \$20,000.00 for a 2003 truck. The term of the loan was for five years at an interest rate of 3.95 percent. Principal and interest payments of \$21,928.60 are due annually. Prior years' principal and interest payments from the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund were \$87,714.40 and \$6,719.16, respectively.

During the current examination period the municipality paid principal of \$21,928.60 and interest of \$379.47 from the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund. These amounts are reflected in major equipment purchases on the 2009 Form MS-965 – Section 1. The loan was paid-in-full on May 7, 2009.

7. Bank Loan

On September 27, 2007, the municipality purchased a tractor for \$54,723.00. The municipality paid a down payment of \$4,723.00 from the General Fund. The remaining \$50,000.00 was borrowed from First Columbia Bank and Trust Company. The term of the loan was for five years at an interest rate of 4.35 percent. Principal and interest payments of \$12,120.45 are due annually. Prior years' principal and interest payments from the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund were \$10,000.00 and \$2,120.45, respectively.

7. <u>Bank Loan (Continued)</u>

During the current examination period the municipality paid principal of \$10,000.00 from the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund. This amount is reflected in major equipment purchases on the 2009 Form MS-965. Additionally, the municipality paid interest of \$2,120.45 from the General Fund. The outstanding balance of the loan as of December 31, 2009 was \$30,000.00, plus interest.



<u>Finding No. 1 - Documentation Supporting Payroll Expenditures Was Not Available For</u> <u>Examination</u>

Our examination disclosed that the municipality transferred \$2,500.00 on January 29, 2009 and \$2,000.00 on March 27, 2009, from its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund to its Payroll Fund for the reimbursement of payroll expenditures from the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund. However, the municipality did not maintain daily payroll time sheets identifying the nature of work performed and the location of work assignments.

Good internal control procedures over payroll should ensure that there is documentation identifying the nature of the work performed and location of work assignments.

The Liquid Fuels Tax Municipal Allocation Law, 72 P.S. § 2615.4, provides, in part, that monies herein allocated may be used only for construction, reconstruction, maintenance and repairs of such public roads or streets, including bridges, culverts and drainage structures, for which they are legally responsible. Also permitted are expenditures involving acquisition, maintenance, repairs and operation of street signs, traffic signs, traffic signal control systems, road equipment, and snow fences.

The Department of Transportation has been statutorily authorized to promulgate regulations concerning the administration of Liquid Fuels Tax Fund money and has determined that certain items, including expenditures made without supporting documentation, are outside the scope of permissible expenditures.

Without payroll documentation that includes daily time sheets that identify the nature of work performed and the location of work assignments, we could not determine if the payroll expenditures were permissible according to the Liquid Fuels Tax Municipal Allocation Law.

The failure to maintain documentation for payroll expenditures as noted above could result in the municipality having to reimburse \$4,500.00 to its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund.

A similar finding was also written in our prior report.

Recommendations

We recommend that the municipality reimburse \$4,500.00 to its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund upon official notification by the Department of Transportation.

<u>Finding No. 1 - Documentation Supporting Payroll Expenditures Was Not Available For</u> <u>Examination (Continued)</u>

Recommendations (Continued)

We further again recommend that the municipality ensure good internal control over payroll by maintaining daily time sheets that identify the nature of work performed and the location of work assignments.

Management's Response

The secretary/treasurer stated:

I replaced the previous Secretary/Treasurer in March of 2009. It has been frustrating trying to find things and documentation, but have finally done so successfully. I know where I put things, but not someone else. Another secretary and myself tried to complete all necessary documents for the end of 2008 and the beginning of 2009.

Auditor's Conclusion

The municipality should maintain daily times sheets identifying the nature of work performed and the location of work assignments. During our next examination we will determine if the municipality complied with our recommendations.

Finding No. 2 - Failure To Properly Prepare Form MS-965

Our examination disclosed that there were numerous errors made in the preparation of the municipality's 2009 Form MS-965. These adjustments, which are disclosed in Note 4, are as follows:

Section 1

- An adjustment of \$(6,448.29) was made to "Winter maintenance services" because transfers totaling \$11,700.00 between two Liquid Fuels Tax Fund accounts were incorrectly reported as expenditures and check Nos. 6683 for \$1,197.74, 6684 for \$878.74, 6690 for \$2,377.30, and 6693 for \$797.93 were not reported.
- An adjustment of \$1,440.46 was made to "Repairs of tools and machinery" because check Nos. 6682 for \$93.60, 6685 for \$79.50, 6686 for \$526.29, 6687 for \$17.10, 6688 for \$74.97, and 6689 for \$649.00 were not reported.
- An adjustment of \$4,886.01 was made to "Maintenance and repair of roads and bridges" because check Nos. 6681 for \$1,460.03, 6691 for \$1,715.19, 6692 for \$942.90, and 6694 for \$767.89 were not reported.
- An adjustment of \$12.00 was made to "Miscellaneous" expenditures because bank service charges were not reported.

Section 2

• An adjustment of \$(260.84) was made to "Miscellaneous" because a transfer between two Liquid Fuels Tax Fund accounts was incorrectly reported as a receipt.

Section 3

• An adjustment of \$2,785.00 was made to "PENNDOT approved adjustments" because the proceeds from the sale of a chipper were not reported as an approved adjustment.

Good internal controls ensure that the municipality complete its Forms MS-965 accurately and completely. The failure to properly complete Forms MS-965 increases the risk that errors or irregularities may occur and remain undetected.

Finding No. 2 - Failure To Properly Prepare Form MS-965 (Continued)

Recommendation

We recommend that the municipality ensure that its Form MS-965 is complete and accurate.

Management's Response

The secretary/treasurer stated:

I replaced the previous Secretary/Treasurer in March of 2009. It has been frustrating trying to find things and documentation, but have finally done so successfully. I know where I put things, but not someone else. Another secretary and myself tried to complete all necessary documents for the end of 2008 and the beginning of 2009.

Auditor's Conclusion

During our next examination we will determine if the municipality complied with our recommendation.

Comment – Summary Of Prior Examination Recommendations

In our prior report we recommended that the Department of Transportation review our examination finding to determine if the municipality should reimburse \$1,145.30 to its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund for the failure to maintain supporting documentation for payroll. A similar finding was also written in our current report (see Finding No. 1).

During our current examination we reviewed a letter dated March 19, 2010, from the Department of Transportation informing the municipality to reimburse \$1,145.30 to its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund. We noted that the municipality reimbursed this amount to its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund on April 28, 2010, which was subsequent to our examination period.

TOWNSHIP OF FISHING CREEK COLUMBIA COUNTY LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND SUMMARY OF EXIT CONFERENCE FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2009

An exit conference was held March 15, 2011. Those participating were:

TOWNSHIP OF FISHING CREEK

Ms. Julie Beishline, Secretary/Treasurer

DEPARTMENT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL

Mr. Vernon J. Brennan, Auditor

The results of the examination were presented and discussed in their entirety.

TOWNSHIP OF FISHING CREEK COLUMBIA COUNTY LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND REPORT DISTRIBUTION FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2009

This report was initially distributed to:

The Honorable Barry J. Schoch, P.E. Secretary Department of Transportation

> Township of Fishing Creek Columbia County 3188 State Route 487 Orangeville, PA 17859

The Honorable Randy Hack

Chairman of the Board of Supervisors

Ms. Julie Beishline

Secretary/Treasurer

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, 318 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120. To view this report online or to contact the Department of the Auditor General, please access our web site at www.auditorgen.state.pa.us.