ATTESTATION ENGAGEMENT

Township of West Cornwall

Lebanon County, Pennsylvania 38-216

Liquid Fuels Tax Fund
For the Period
January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020

June 2021



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General

Timothy L. DeFoor • Auditor General



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
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TIMOTHY L. DEFOOR AUDITOR GENERAL

Independent Auditor's Report

Yassmin Gramian, P.E. Acting Secretary Department of Transportation Harrisburg, PA 17120

We examined the accompanying Forms MS-965 With Adjustments for the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund of the Township of West Cornwall, Lebanon County, for the period January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020. The municipality's management is responsible for presenting the Forms MS-965 in accordance with the criteria described in the Background section of this report and the Department of Transportation's *Publication 9*. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the Forms 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. Those standards require that we plan and perform the examination to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the Forms MS-965 are presented in accordance with the criteria described above, in all material respects. An examination involves performing procedures to obtain evidence about the Forms MS-965. The nature, timing and extent of the procedures selected depend on our judgement, including an assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the Forms MS-965, whether due to fraud or error. We believe that the evidence we obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide 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*.

<u>Independent Auditor's Report (Continued)</u>

As described in the Auditor Description Of Select Transactions section of this report, the adjustments included on the Forms MS-965 With Adjustments are made by the Department of the Auditor General.

As discussed in Finding No. 2, the township expended \$14,794.29 during 2019 for paving over one inch without obtaining prior approval from the Department of Transportation.

In our opinion, except for the matter discussed in the preceding paragraph, the Forms MS-965 With Adjustments present, in all material respects, the information required by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation for the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund of the Township of West Cornwall, Lebanon County, for the period January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020, in accordance with the criteria described in the Background section of this report and the Department of Transportation's *Publication 9*.

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we are required to report all deficiencies that are considered to be significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in internal control; fraud and noncompliance with provisions of laws or regulations that have a material effect on the Forms MS-965, and any other instances that warrant the attention of those charged with governance; noncompliance with provisions of contracts or grant agreements, and abuse that has a material effect on the Forms MS-965. We are also required to obtain and report the views of responsible officials concerning the findings, conclusions, and recommendations, as well as any planned corrective actions. We performed our examination to express an opinion on whether the Forms 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 Forms MS-965 or on compliance and other matters; accordingly, we express no such opinions.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose of expressing an opinion on whether the Forms MS-965 are presented in accordance with the criteria described above and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies and therefore, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that were not identified. However, as described below, we identified certain deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses and other deficiencies that we consider to be significant deficiencies.

A *deficiency in internal control* 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 and correct, misstatements on a timely basis. A *material weakness* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the Forms MS-965 will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. We consider the deficiency below to be a material weakness:

• Electronic Imaging Of Cancelled Checks From The Bank Did Not Include The Back Of The Checks - Recurring.

Independent Auditor's Report (Continued)

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Forms MS-965 are free from material misstatement, we performed tests of the Township of West Cornwall, Lebanon County's compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of amounts on the Forms MS-965. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our engagement, and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed the following instance of noncompliance that is required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*:

• Failure To Obtain Project Approval.

The examination finding for electronic imaging of canceled checks from the bank not including the back of the checks in this report cites conditions that existed in the operation of the municipality during the previous engagement period and were not corrected during the current examination period. The municipality should strive to comply with the recommendation as noted in this report.

The purpose of this report is to determine whether the municipality's Liquid Fuels Tax Fund money is spent in accordance with the laws and regulations identified in the Background section of this report and the Department of Transportation's *Publication 9*. This report is not suitable for any other purpose.

We appreciate the courtesy extended by the Township of West Cornwall, Lebanon County, to us during the course of our examination. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Bureau of County Audits at 717-787-1363.

June 3, 2021

Timothy L. DeFoor Auditor General

Timothy L. Detool

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Background	1
Financial Section:	
2019 Form MS-965 With Adjustments	5
2020 Form MS-965 With Adjustments	8
Auditor Description Of Select Transactions	11
Findings And Recommendations:	
Finding No. 1 - Electronic Imaging Of Cancelled Checks From The Bank Did Not Include The Back Of The Checks - Recurring	12
Finding No. 2 - Failure To Obtain Project Approval	14
Summary Of Prior Examination Recommendations	16
Summary Of Exit Conference	17
Report Distribution	18

Background

The Liquid Fuels Tax Municipal Allocation Law, Act 655 of 1956, as amended, (72 P.S. § 2615.5 et sec.), 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 allocation of Liquid Fuels Tax funds and annual maintenance payments that it receives into a special fund called either 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 such a 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. Department of Transportation's *Publication 9* includes the policies and procedures for the administration of Act 655, as amended, and the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund money. However, if there is a difference between *Publication 9* and any legislation, the legislation shall govern.

To qualify for the annual allocation of Liquid Fuels Tax funds, *Publication 9* indicates that each municipality shall:

- 1. Submit annual reports (MS-965, Actual Use Report, MS-965P, Project and Miscellaneous Receipts, and MS-965S, Record of Checks).
- 2. Make deposits and payments or expenditures in compliance with Act 655 of 1956, as amended. Failure to do so may result in not receiving allocations from PennDOT until all discrepancies are resolved. *Publication 9*, Section 2.6, includes information about investing Liquid Fuels Tax monies, using loan or bond proceeds, and types of receipts into the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund.

Background (Continued)

- 3. Submit the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development's (DCED) Report of Elected and Appointed Officials by January 31st and the Survey of Financial Condition By March 15th.
- 4. Ensure resolution of all Contractor Responsibility Program (CRP) holds and blocks imposed by the Department of Revenue and the Department of Labor and Industry.
- 5. Ensure resolution of all reimbursements required as a result of audits performed by the Department of the Auditor General or monitoring reviews performed by the Department of Transportation's Financial Consultants.

Criteria

The criteria for the Form MS-965 With Adjustment are described below.

Section 1 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 with varying yearly costs in excess of the amounts indicated below:

2017	2018	2019	2020
¢10.700.00	¢10,000,00	¢11 100 00	¢11 200 00
\$10,700.00	\$10,900.00	\$11,100.00	\$11,300.00

• Minor equipment purchases are purchases of road machinery and road equipment with varying yearly costs that are less than or equal to the amounts indicated below:

 2017	2018	2019	2020
\$10,700.00	\$10,900.00	\$11,100.00	\$11,300.00

• Agility projects are exchanges of services with the Department of Transportation.

Background (Continued)

Section 2 of Form MS-965 With Adjustments provides information on the fund balance. Categories requiring explanation include:

- The state allocation is available from the Department of Transportation in March of each year. The amount the municipality receives is based half on its population and half on its road mileage.
- Municipalities that transferred roads from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to the municipality through the Highway Transfer Program receive annual turnback allocations in March of each year from the Department of Transportation. Turnback allocations are based on the mileage of the roads transferred.
- Expenditures include the total transferred from Section 1.

Section 3 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.

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.

Background (Continued)

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.

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.

TOWNSHIP OF WEST CORNWALL LEBANON COUNTY LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND 2019 FORM MS-965 – SECTION 1 WITH ADJUSTMENTS

Expenditure Summary	Reported		Adjustments		Adjusted Amount	
Minor equipment purchases	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-
Computer/Computer related training		-		-		-
Major equipment purchases		-		-		-
Agility projects		-		-		-
Cleaning streets and gutters		-		-		-
Winter maintenance services		12,127.11		-		12,127.11
Traffic control devices		-		-		-
Street lighting		-		-		-
Storm sewers and drains		-		-		-
Repairs of tools and machinery		-		-		-
Maintenance and repair of						
roads and bridges		14,794.29		(14,794.29)		-
Highway construction and						
rebuilding projects		-		14,794.29		14,794.29
Miscellaneous						
Total (To Section 2, Line 5)	\$	26,921.40	\$		\$	26,921.40

TOWNSHIP OF WEST CORNWALL LEBANON COUNTY LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND 2019 FORM MS-965 – SECTION 2 WITH ADJUSTMENTS

Fund Balance	Reported			Adjustments	Adjusted Amount		
1. Balance, January 1, 2019	\$	\$ 84,904.77		\$ -		84,904.77	
Receipts:							
2. State allocation		74,964.54		-		74,964.54	
2a. Turnback allocation		3,120.00		-		3,120.00	
2b. Interest on investments		33,347.02		(31,103.99)		2,243.03	
2c. Miscellaneous				31,103.99		31,103.99	
3. Total receipts		111,431.56				111,431.56	
4. Total funds available		196,336.33				196,336.33	
5. Expenditures (Section 1)		26,921.40				26,921.40	
6. Balance, December 31, 2019	\$	169,414.93	\$		\$	169,414.93	

TOWNSHIP OF WEST CORNWALL LEBANON COUNTY LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND 2019 FORM MS-965 – SECTION 3 WITH ADJUSTMENTS

Equipment Balance	Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Adjus	stments	 Adjusted Amount
1. Prior year equipment balance	\$	46,081.13	\$	-	\$ 46,081.13																																																		
2. Add: Current year equipment allocation (20% of Lines 2 + 2a, Section 2)		15,616.91		-	15,616.91																																																		
3. PENNDOT approved adjustments					 -																																																		
4. Total funds available for equipment acquisition		61,698.04		-	61,698.04																																																		
5. Less: Major equipment expenditures					 -																																																		
6. Remainder		61,698.04			61,698.04																																																		
7. Equipment balance available for subsequent year (Lesser of Line 6 or Section 2 balance, but not less than zero)	\$	61,698.04	\$		\$ 61,698.04																																																		

TOWNSHIP OF WEST CORNWALL LEBANON COUNTY LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND 2020 FORM MS-965 – SECTION 1 WITH ADJUSTMENTS

Expenditure Summary	Reported		Adjustments		Adjusted Amount	
Minor equipment purchases	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-
Computer/Computer related training		-		-		_
Major equipment purchases		-		-		-
Agility projects		-		-		_
Cleaning streets and gutters		-		-		-
Winter maintenance services		3,188.56		-		3,188.56
Traffic control devices		-		-		-
Street lighting		-		-		-
Storm sewers and drains		-		-		-
Repairs of tools and machinery		-		-		-
Maintenance and repair of						
roads and bridges		-		-		-
Highway construction and						
rebuilding projects		-		-		-
Miscellaneous						
Total (To Section 2, Line 5)	\$	3,188.56	\$		\$	3,188.56

TOWNSHIP OF WEST CORNWALL LEBANON COUNTY LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND 2020 FORM MS-965 – SECTION 2 WITH ADJUSTMENTS

Fund Balance	Reported	Adjustments	Adjusted Amount
1. Balance, January 1, 2020	\$ 169,414.93	\$ -	\$ 169,414.93
Receipts:			
2. State allocation	72,955.46	-	72,955.46
2a. Turnback allocation	3,120.00	-	3,120.00
2b. Interest on investments	1,084.53	-	1,084.53
2c. Miscellaneous			
3. Total receipts	77,159.99		77,159.99
4. Total funds available	246,574.92		246,574.92
5. Expenditures (Section 1)	3,188.56		3,188.56
6. Balance, December 31, 2020	\$ 243,386.36	\$ -	\$ 243,386.36

TOWNSHIP OF WEST CORNWALL LEBANON COUNTY LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND 2020 FORM MS-965 – SECTION 3 WITH ADJUSTMENTS

Equipment Balance	Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported Adjustments		stments	Adjusted Amount	
1. Prior year equipment balance	\$	61,698.04	\$	-	\$	61,698.04							
2. Add: Current year equipment allocation (20% of Lines 2 + 2a, Section 2)		15,215.09		-		15,215.09							
3. PENNDOT approved adjustments													
4. Total funds available for equipment acquisition		76,913.13		-		76,913.13							
5. Less: Major equipment expenditures						<u>-</u>							
6. Remainder		76,913.13		_		76,913.13							
7. Equipment balance available for subsequent year (Lesser of Line 6 or Section 2 balance, but not less than zero)	\$	76,913.13	\$	<u>-</u>	\$	76,913.13							

TOWNSHIP OF WEST CORNWALL LEBANON COUNTY LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND AUDITOR DESCRIPTION OF SELECT TRANSACTIONS FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2019 TO DECEMBER 31, 2020

The following information relates to certain types of transactions for which the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation requested that we provide additional detail.

<u>Adjustments</u>

2019 - Section 1

Adjustments were made to "Maintenance and repair of roads and bridges" and "Highway construction and rebuilding projects" because expenditures of \$14,794.29 were misclassified.

<u>2019 - Section 2</u>

Adjustments were made to "Interest on investments" and "Miscellaneous" because receipts of \$31,103.99 were misclassified.

<u>Finding No. 1 - Electronic Imaging Of Cancelled Checks From The Bank Did Not Include</u> The Back Of The Checks - Recurring

We cited the municipality for failing to obtain electronic imaging of the backs of cancelled checks from the bank in our prior report for the period January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2018. Our current examination disclosed that the imaging of cancelled checks from the bank for the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund account was not acceptable because the bank provides only an image of the front side of the cancelled checks. For us to properly complete our examination testing, we have to examine the front and the back of the cancelled checks. Although the municipality obtained and provided us with copies of the backs of those cancelled checks that we needed to review for our examination, the municipality should be receiving images of the backs of all cancelled checks in order to have good internal controls.

Good internal controls and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Management Directive 210.11, dated June 16, 1997, require that imaging systems comply with the provisions of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) procedures for record keeping with electronic imaging. To be acceptable, the documents provided by the system must meet IRS procedures governing size, content, format, and pattern. Those procedures require that all images produced by the imaging system exhibit a high degree of legibility and readability when displayed on paper. Legibility includes the ability to identify all letters and numerals positively and quickly. Readability includes the ability to recognize a group of letters or numerals as words or completed numbers. Imaged documents must include the front and back of a document in which both the front and back are used.

Further, good internal controls ensure that by having a municipal official review the front and back of the cancelled checks, any errors or misappropriations can be detected on a timely basis.

Without this control, the potential exists for errors or misappropriations to go undetected for long periods of time.

This finding occurred because the municipality's financial institution only provides the images of the front of the checks on the monthly bank statements. The municipality thought they were providing both front and back images.

Finding No. 1 - Electronic Imaging Of Cancelled Checks From The Bank Did Not Include The Back Of The Checks - Recurring (Continued)

Recommendations

We again recommend that the municipal officials obtain images of the front and back of cancelled checks in accordance with Directive 210.11. Additionally, municipal officials should review the front and back of each cancelled check for any errors or misappropriations.

Management's Response

The municipal officials offered no formal response at this time.

Auditor's Conclusion

This is a recurring finding. We strongly recommend that the municipality comply with our recommendations. During our next examination we will determine if the municipality complied with our recommendations

Finding No. 2 - Failure To Obtain Project Approval

Our examination disclosed that the municipality expended \$14,794.29 for paving in excess of one inch without obtaining the approval of the Department of Transportation. Before paving of one inch in thickness or greater is done, the municipality must obtain the approval of the Department of Transportation. However, the municipality did not file an application with the Department of Transportation for the project and also failed to submit specifications for approval.

The Department of Transportation's *Publication 9* contains the policies and procedures for the administration of the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund. *Publication 9*, Chapter Two, Section 2.7.2, states that nonpermissible expenditures include "Construction and reconstruction projects without prior PENNDOT approval."

Additionally, *Publication 9*, Chapter Two, Section 2.8, states, in part:

The following criteria is used to determine when a project is required for work on local roads utilizing Liquid Fuels Tax Funds, when construction, reconstruction and/or resurfacing work exceeds one inch or more in depth as well as other activities.

Bituminous Surface: One inch thickness or greater

The failure to comply with the Department of Transportation's *Publication 9* could result in the municipality having to reimburse \$14,794.29 to its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund.

This finding occurred because the municipality piggybacked the paving from another municipality and did not realize they needed prior approval from the Department of Transportation.

Recommendations

We recommend that the municipality reimburse \$14,794.29 to its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund upon official notification by the Department of Transportation.

We further recommend that before the municipality expends money on a project, it applies for and obtains prior approval for the project, and when the project is completed it obtains approval of the completed work.

Finding No. 2 - Failure To Obtain Project Approval (Continued)

Management's Response

The municipal officials offered no formal response at this time.

Auditor's Conclusion

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

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 \$31,103.99 to its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund for nonpermissible expenditures.

During our current examination, we reviewed a letter dated June 7, 2019, from the Department of Transportation directing the municipality to reimburse \$31,103.99 to its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund. We noted that the municipality reimbursed \$19,399.99 and \$11,704.00 to its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund on May 17, 2019 and June 14, 2019, respectively.

In our prior report, we also recommended that the municipality:

- Comply with Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Management Directive 210.11 by obtaining images of both the front and back of canceled checks from its financial institution. Additionally, municipal officials should review the front and back of each canceled check for any errors or misappropriations.
- Comply with the Liquid Fuels Tax Municipal Allocation Law regarding permissible expenditures.

During our current examination, we noted that the municipality complied with the second bulleted recommendation. However, the municipality did not comply with the first bulleted recommendations (see Finding No. 1).

TOWNSHIP OF WEST CORNWALL LEBANON COUNTY LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND SUMMARY OF EXIT CONFERENCE FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2019 TO DECEMBER 31, 2020

An exit conference was held April 19, 2021. Those participating were:

TOWNSHIP OF WEST CORNWALL

Ms. Lisa Geist, Secretary/Treasurer

DEPARTMENT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL

Mr. Michael Klassen, Audit Supervisor

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

This report was initially distributed to:

Yassmin Gramian, P.E.

Acting Secretary
Department of Transportation

Township of West Cornwall

Lebanon County
73 South Zinns Mill Road
Lebanon, PA 17042

The Honorable Russell Gibble

Chairman of the Board of Supervisors

Ms. Lisa Geist Secretary/Treasurer

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.