



**CITY OF TITUSVILLE POLICE  
PENSION PLAN**

**CRAWFORD COUNTY**

**COMPLIANCE AUDIT REPORT**

**FOR THE PERIOD**

**JANUARY 1, 2011, TO DECEMBER 31, 2012**

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**

**EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE - AUDITOR GENERAL**

**DEPARTMENT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL**



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**EUGENE A. DePASQUALE**  
**AUDITOR GENERAL**

The Honorable Mayor and City Council  
City of Titusville  
Crawford County  
Titusville, PA 16354

We have conducted a compliance audit of the City of Titusville Police Pension Plan for the period January 1, 2011, to December 31, 2012. 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 finding and conclusions based on our audit objective. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our finding and 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. Our methodology addressed determinations about the following:

- Whether state aid was properly determined and deposited in accordance with Act 205 requirements.
- Whether employer contributions are determined and deposited in accordance with the plan's governing document and applicable laws and regulations.
- Whether employee contributions are required and, if so, are determined, deducted and deposited into the pension plan and are in accordance with the plan provisions and applicable laws and regulations.
- Whether benefit payments, if any, represent payments to all (and only) those entitled to receive them and are properly determined in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

- Whether obligations for plan benefits are accurately determined in accordance with plan provisions and based on complete and accurate participant data; and whether actuarial valuation reports are prepared and submitted to the Public Employee Retirement Commission (PERC) in accordance with state law and 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.
- Whether the special ad hoc postretirement adjustment granted to eligible pensioners is in accordance with applicable laws and regulations and whether the ad hoc reimbursement received by the municipality was treated in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.
- Whether transfers were properly authorized, accurate, timely and properly recorded.
- Whether the pension plan is in compliance with state regulations for distressed municipalities.

The City of Titusville contracted with an independent certified public accounting firm for annual audits of its basic financial statements which are available at the city's offices. Those financial statements were not audited by us and, accordingly, we express no opinion or other form of assurance on them.

City officials are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the City of Titusville 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 city's internal controls as they relate to the city'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, 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 tests indicated that, in all significant respects, the City of Titusville Police Pension Plan was administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies, except as noted in the following finding further discussed later in this report:

Finding - Ordinance Improperly Amended By Resolution

As previously noted, the objective of our audit of the City of Titusville Police Pension Plan was to determine compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies. Act 205 was amended on September 18, 2009, through the adoption of Act 44 of 2009. Among several provisions relating to municipal pension plans, the act provides for the implementation of a distress recovery program. Three levels of distress have been established:

<u>Level</u>	<u>Indication</u>	<u>Funding Criteria</u>
I	Minimal distress	70-89%
II	Moderate distress	50-69%
III	Severe distress	Less than 50%

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 historical trend information contained in the schedule of funding progress included in this report which indicates a continued decline of assets available to satisfy the long-term liabilities of the plan. For example, **the plan's funded ratio went from 84.7% as of January 1, 2007, to a ratio of 64.2% as of January 1, 2011**, which is the most recent date available. **Based on this information, the Public Employee Retirement Commission issued a notification that the city is currently in Level II moderate distress status.** We encourage city officials to monitor the funding of the police pension plan to ensure its long-term financial stability.

The contents of this report were discussed with officials of City of Titusville 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.



EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE  
Auditor General

November 22, 2013

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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. 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 City of Titusville Police Pension Plan is also governed by implementing regulations adopted by the 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 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 Titusville Police Pension Plan is a single-employer defined benefit pension plan locally controlled by the provisions of Article 141 of the city's codified ordinances. The plan is also affected by the provisions of collective bargaining agreements between the city and its police officers. As of December 31, 2012, the plan had 9 active members and 23 retirees receiving pension benefits.

CITY OF TITUSVILLE POLICE PENSION PLAN  
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

**Finding – Ordinance Improperly Amended By Resolution**

Condition: The pension plan governing document, Article 141 of the city’s codified ordinances, was restated in its entirety by a plan document adopted by Resolution No. 11 of 2013.

Criteria: In Wynne v. Lower Merion Township, 181 Pa. Superior Ct., 524, the Pennsylvania Superior Court held that an ordinance may be amended only by another ordinance and not by a resolution.

Cause: Municipal officials were unaware that a resolution cannot amend an ordinance.

Effect: The failure to properly adopt the restated plan document could result in inconsistent or improper benefit calculations and incorrect benefit payments from the pension plan.

Recommendation: We recommend that the city amend the plan’s governing document through the adoption of a properly executed ordinance.

Management Response: City officials agreed with the finding without exception.

CITY OF TITUSVILLE 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, 2007, is as follows:

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
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)	Covered Payroll (c)	Unfunded (Assets in Excess of) Actuarial Accrued Liability as a % of Payroll [(b-a)/(c)]
01-01-07	\$ 5,321,274	\$ 6,282,698	\$ 961,424	84.7%	\$ 608,686	158.0%
01-01-09	4,097,309	6,777,467	2,680,158	60.5%	536,350	499.7%
01-01-11	4,714,421	7,343,375	2,628,954	64.2%	637,332	412.5%

Note: The market values of the plan's assets at 01-01-09 and 01-01-11 have been adjusted to reflect the smoothing of gains and/or losses over a 5-year averaging period, subject to a corridor between 80 to 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 TITUSVILLE 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.

Trends in unfunded (assets in excess of) actuarial accrued liability and annual covered payroll are both affected by inflation. Expressing the unfunded (assets in excess of) actuarial accrued liability as a percentage of annual covered payroll (Column 6) approximately adjusts for the effects of inflation and aids analysis of the plan's progress made in accumulating sufficient assets to pay benefits when due. Generally, where there is an unfunded actuarial accrued liability, the smaller this percentage, the stronger the plan. When assets are in excess of the actuarial accrued liability, the higher the bracketed percentage, the stronger the plan.

CITY OF TITUSVILLE POLICE PENSION PLAN  
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION  
(UNAUDITED)

SCHEDULE OF CONTRIBUTIONS FROM EMPLOYER  
AND OTHER CONTRIBUTING ENTITIES

Year Ended December 31	Annual Required Contribution	Percentage Contributed
2007	\$ 241,556	100.0%
2008	254,183	100.0%
2009	250,584	100.0%
2010	260,568	100.0%
2011	324,908	100.0%
2012	309,409	100.0%

CITY OF TITUSVILLE POLICE PENSION PLAN  
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION  
NOTES TO SUPPLEMENTARY SCHEDULES  
(UNAUDITED)

The information presented in the required 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, 2011
Actuarial cost method	Entry age normal
Amortization method	Level dollar
Remaining amortization period	19 years
Asset valuation method	Plan assets are valued using a 5-year averaging period, subject to a corridor between 80-120% of the market value of assets.
Actuarial assumptions:	
Investment rate of return	8.0%
Projected salary increases	5.0%

CITY OF TITUSVILLE POLICE PENSION PLAN  
COMMENTS

Wage Increases Prior To Retirement

The January 1, 2011, to December 31, 2013, collective bargaining agreement between the city and its police officers provides that immediately prior to retirement or vesting, police officers shall be classified as a Department Review Officer and receive either a 40 percent increase of their most recent base wage or, if opting to purchase military time towards retirement, a 30 percent increase of their most recent base wage. Retirement calculations are then based on 50 percent of the increased wages. It should be noted the election to be classified as a Departmental Review Officer and receive the wage increase is no longer available for police officers hired on or after February 1, 2008.

Third class cities which have adopted optional charter plans under the Optional Third Class City Charter Law are not precluded from providing pension benefits different from those prescribed in the Third Class City Code because the Optional Third Class City Charter Law grants broad municipal powers, which have been interpreted by the courts to be similar to powers granted to home rule municipalities, and because unlike the Home Rule Charter and Optional Plans Law, the Optional Third Class City Charter Law does not expressly prohibit the enactment of municipal ordinances inconsistent with pre-1972 statutes affecting employee benefits. Therefore, third class cities which have adopted optional charters are not constrained by the provisions of the Third Class City Code.

We encourage city officials to review the methodology used to calculate pension benefits for its police officers. The city's practice of determining pension benefits for police officers hired prior to February 1, 2008, has increased the pension benefits for the plan's retirees, increased the required municipal contributions to the plan and jeopardized the fiscal soundness of the pension plan.

CITY OF TITUSVILLE POLICE PENSION PLAN  
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom Corbett  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

City of Titusville Police Pension Plan  
Crawford County  
107 North Franklin Street  
Titusville, PA 16354

The Honorable Esther M. Smith	Mayor
Mr. Larry A. Manross	City Manager
Ms. Heather Wilson	Finance Clerk
Mr. Mark L. Mehlenbacher	Plan Administrator

This report is a matter of public record and is available online at [www.auditorgen.state.pa.us](http://www.auditorgen.state.pa.us). Media questions about the report can be directed to the Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General, Office of Communications, 231 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120; via email to: [news@auditorgen.state.pa.us](mailto:news@auditorgen.state.pa.us).