

COMPLIANCE AUDIT

Highspire Borough Non-Uniformed Pension Plan Dauphin County, Pennsylvania For the Period January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2019

June 2020



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of the Auditor General

Eugene A. DePasquale • Auditor General



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**EUGENE A. DePASQUALE
AUDITOR GENERAL**

The Honorable Mayor and Borough Council
Highspire Borough
Dauphin County
Highspire, PA 17034

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Highspire Borough Non-Uniformed Pension Plan for the period January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2019. 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 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 both plan members 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 benefits due to the retired individuals and comparing these amounts to supporting documentation evidencing amounts determined and actually paid to the recipients. We also determined whether retirement benefits calculated for the lone plan member who elected to vest during the current audit period, represent payments to all (and only) those entitled to receive them and were properly determined in accordance with the plan's governing document, applicable laws and regulations by recalculating the amount of the pension benefits due to the retired individual and comparing these amounts to supporting documentation evidencing amounts determined.
- We determined whether the January 1, 2017, and January 1, 2019 actuarial valuation reports were prepared and submitted by March 31, 2018 and 2020, 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.

Highspire Borough contracted with an independent certified public accounting firm for annual audits of its basic financial statements for the years ended December 31, 2016, 2017 and 2018 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 Highspire Borough Non-Uniformed Pension Plan 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 Highspire Borough Non-Uniformed 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.

The contents of this report were discussed with officials of Highspire 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.

May 13, 2020



EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE
Auditor General

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Background.....	1
Supplementary Information	2
Report Distribution List	6

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 Highspire Borough Non-Uniformed Pension Plan is also governed by implementing regulations published at Title 16, Part IV of the Pennsylvania Code and applicable provisions of various other state statutes.

The Highspire Borough Non-Uniformed Pension Plan is a single-employer defined benefit pension plan locally controlled by the provisions of Ordinance No. 532, as amended, and separately executed plan agreement with the plan's custodian. The plan is also affected by the provisions of collective bargaining agreements between the borough and its non-uniformed employees. The plan was established January 1, 1980. Active members are required to contribute 3 percent of compensation to the plan. As of December 31, 2019, the plan had 12 active members, 3 terminated members eligible for vested benefits in the future, and 7 retirees receiving pension benefits.

HIGHSPIRE BOROUGH NON-UNIFORMED 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, 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	\$ 856,332	\$ 1,225,752	\$ 369,420	69.9%
01-01-17	1,077,191	1,429,409	352,218	75.4%
01-01-19	1,371,521	1,696,490	324,969	80.8%

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 over a five-year averaging period 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.

HIGHSPIRE BOROUGH NON-UNIFORMED 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.

HIGHSPIRE BOROUGH NON-UNIFORMED PENSION PLAN
 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
2010	\$ 45,167	\$ 45,579	\$ (412)	\$ 363,956	12.52%
2011	51,116	51,116	-	440,728	11.60%
2012	48,234	48,234	-	447,282	10.78%
2013	49,433	49,433	-	469,153	10.54%
2014	66,312	66,312	-	487,580	13.60%
2015	69,138	69,138	-	526,569	13.13%
2016	93,071	93,071	-	509,856	18.25%
2017	100,885	100,885	-	610,294	16.53%
2018	122,858	122,858	-	606,736	20.25%
2019	128,270	128,270	-		

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

HIGHSPIRE BOROUGH NON-UNIFORMED 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, 2019
Actuarial cost method	Entry age normal
Amortization method	Level dollar
Remaining amortization period	8 years
Asset valuation method	5-year smoothing, subject to a corridor between 80-120 percent of the market value of assets
Actuarial assumptions:	
Investment rate of return	7.75%
Projected salary increases	6.00%
Cost-of-living adjustments	None assumed

HIGHSPIRE BOROUGH NON-UNIFORMED PENSION PLAN
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

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