

COMPLIANCE AUDIT

Spangler Fire Company Relief Association Cambria County, Pennsylvania For the Period January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2020

November 2021



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of the Auditor General

Timothy L. DeFoor • Auditor General



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TIMOTHY L. DEFOOR
AUDITOR GENERAL

Mr. Zachary Malicky, President
Spangler Fire Company Relief Association
Cambria County

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Spangler Fire Company Relief Association (relief association) for the period January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2020. The audit was conducted pursuant to authority derived from Article VIII, Section 10 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; Section 403 of The Fiscal Code, 72 P.S. § 403; and the Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Act, 35 Pa.C.S. § 7411 *et seq.* ("VFRA Act"), as most recently amended by Act 91 of 2020.

The objectives of the audit were:

1. To determine if the relief association took appropriate corrective action to address the finding contained in our prior audit report.
2. To determine if the relief association complied with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures as they relate to the receipt of state aid and the expenditure of relief association funds.

Our audit was limited to the areas related to the objectives identified above and was not, nor was it required to be, conducted in accordance with Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

Relief association officers are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the relief association's administration of state aid and accumulated relief funds complies with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures, including the safeguarding of assets. Relief association officers are responsible for complying with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures. It is our responsibility to perform procedures to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to the extent necessary to satisfy the audit objectives. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our conclusions.

This report is a revised report previously dated October 22, 2021, and is revised to correct an error that was in the state aid allocation table on page 1 of the Background section concerning the name of a municipality that distributed state aid to the relief association.

We were not able to obtain an independent confirmation of the cash balance directly from the financial institution. Therefore, while the relief association provided copies of bank statements that indicated that, as of December 31, 2020, the relief association had a cash balance of \$7,073, we were not able to verify this cash balance.

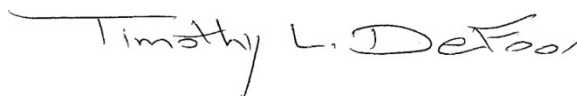
We were also not able to obtain copies of canceled or imaged checks from the relief association. While the relief association provided copies of the bank statements, the relief association failed to provide copies of canceled or imaged checks. Without copies of canceled or imaged checks, we were not able to determine whether two relief association officers authorized and signed the checks as required by the VFRA Act.

Based on our audit procedures, we conclude that, except for the effects, if any, of the matters described in the two preceding paragraphs, for the period January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2020:

- The relief association took appropriate corrective action to address the finding contained in our prior audit report.
- The relief association, in all significant respects, complied with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures as they relate to the receipt of state aid and the expenditure of relief association funds, except as noted in the finding listed below and discussed later in this report.

Finding – Undocumented Expenditure

The contents of this report were discussed with the management of the relief association and, where appropriate, their response has been included in the report. We would like to thank the relief association officials for the cooperation extended to us during the conduct of the audit.



November 1, 2021

Timothy L. DeFoor
Auditor General

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BACKGROUND

Pursuant to Article VIII, Section 10 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Section 403 of The Fiscal Code¹, and the Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association Act² ("VFRA Act"), the Department of the Auditor General's duty is to audit the accounts and records of every volunteer firefighters' relief association to determine that funds received under the Foreign Fire Insurance Tax Distribution Law³ (commonly referred to as Act 205) are properly expended.

The relief association is a charitable organization that was formed primarily to afford financial protection to volunteer firefighters and to encourage individuals to participate in volunteer fire service.

The VFRA Act governs the overall operation of volunteer firefighters' relief associations. Relief association bylaws define the specific operational procedures by which relief associations conduct business. To fulfill its primary purpose, the VFRA Act authorizes specific types of expenditures and prescribes appropriate volunteer firefighters' relief association investment options. Within the parameters established by the VFRA Act, it is the responsibility of relief associations to choose investments in a proper and prudent manner.

Volunteer firefighters' relief associations receive public tax monies, and the association officers therefore have a responsibility to the public to conduct the association's financial affairs in a businesslike manner and to maintain sufficient financial records to support the propriety of all association transactions. Volunteer firefighters' relief association officers are also responsible for ensuring that the association operates in accordance with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws and administrative procedures.

Act 205 sets forth the computation of the Foreign Fire Insurance Tax Distribution paid to each applicable municipality throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The amount of the distribution is based upon the population of each municipality and the market value of real estate within the municipality. Upon receipt of this distribution, the municipality must allocate the funds to the volunteer firefighters' relief association of the fire service organization or fire service organizations that is or are recognized as providing the service to the municipality.

The relief association was allocated state aid from the following municipalities:

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Northern Cambria Borough	Cambria	\$6,714	\$7,264	\$7,382
West Carroll Township	Cambria	\$2,338	\$2,585	\$2,628

¹ 72 P.S. § 403 (as last amended by Act 44 of 2017).

² 35 Pa.C.S. § 7411 *et seq.* See specifically, 35 Pa.C.S. § 7418 (amended by Act 91 of 2020).

³ 53 P.S. § 895.701 *et seq.* (Act 205 of 1984, as amended by Act 119 of 1990).

BACKGROUND – (Continued)

Based on the relief association’s records, its total cash as of December 31, 2020 was \$7,073, as illustrated below:

Cash	<u>\$ 7,073</u>
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Based on the relief association’s records, its total expenditures for the period January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2020 were \$34,341, as noted below. The accuracy of these expenditures was evaluated as part of the Department’s audit to conclude on the relief association’s compliance with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures as they relate to the receipt of state aid and the expenditure of relief association funds.⁴ **The scope of the Department’s audit does not include the issuance of an opinion on the accuracy of these amounts.**

Expenditures:

Benefit Services:

Insurance premiums	\$ 30,320
Tokens of sympathy and goodwill	<u>60</u>
Total Benefit Services	<u>\$ 30,380</u>

Fire Services:

Equipment purchased	\$ 850
Equipment maintenance	302
Training expenses	<u>2,146</u>
Total Fire Services	<u>\$ 3,298</u>

Administrative Services:

Other administrative expenses	<u>\$ 125</u>
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Other Expenditures:

Undocumented expenditure	<u>\$ 538</u>
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Total Expenditures	<u>\$ 34,341</u>
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The volunteer firefighters’ relief association and the affiliated fire service organization are separate, legal entities. The relief association is affiliated with the following fire service organization:

Spangler Fire Company

⁴ Accuracy was evaluated for a selection of transactions based on dollar amount, category, and/or random selection.

SPANGLER FIRE COMPANY RELIEF ASSOCIATION
STATUS OF PRIOR FINDING

COMPLIANCE WITH PRIOR AUDIT FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

The relief association has complied with the prior audit finding and recommendation, as follows:

- Untimely Receipt And Deposit Of State Aid

By timely receiving and depositing all income received.

SPANGLER FIRE COMPANY RELIEF ASSOCIATION
FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

Finding – Undocumented Expenditure

Condition: The relief association was unable to provide adequate supporting documentation for an expenditure amounting to \$538 to First Out Specialty on February 6, 2018.

Criteria: Section 7418(a) of the VFRA Act states:

The Office of Auditor General shall have the power and its duty shall be to audit the accounts and records of every volunteer firefighters' relief association receiving money under Chapter 7 of the Act of December 18, 1984 (P.L. 1005, No. 205), known as the Municipal Pension Plan Funding Standard and Recovery Act, as far as may be necessary to satisfy the Auditor General that the money received was or is being expended for no purpose other than that authorized by this subchapter. Copies of all audits shall be furnished to the Governor.

Prudent business practice dictates that supporting documentation be maintained to evidence the propriety of all financial transactions.

Cause: The treasurer was unable to locate an invoice for the expenditure and no further reason was provided for why this occurred.

Effect: Lack of supporting documentation, such as an invoice and/or itemized receipt, made it impossible to determine if the expenditure was made in accordance with Section 7416(f) of the VFRA Act. In addition, the failure to maintain adequate supporting documentation for relief association expenditures can lead to an increased risk of errors occurring and funds being misappropriated.

Recommendation: We recommend that the relief association officials provide this department with adequate supporting documentation, such as an invoice and/or itemized receipt, to ensure the propriety of the expenditure or that the relief association be reimbursed \$538 for the undocumented expenditure. We also recommend that the relief association officials maintain supporting documentation for all future expenditures. For further guidance, please refer to the Auditor General's publication, MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' RELIEF ASSOCIATIONS.

Management's Response: Relief association management agreed with the finding as presented at the audit exit conference and indicated they will take action to comply with the recommendation.

Auditor's Conclusion: Compliance will be subject to verification through our next audit.

SPANGLER FIRE COMPANY RELIEF ASSOCIATION
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom W. Wolf
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Spangler Fire Company Relief Association Governing Body:

Mr. Zachary Malicky
President

Mr. Donald Eagler
Vice President

Ms. Lisa Uhran
Secretary

Ms. Shirley Gormish
Treasurer

The following municipalities allocated foreign fire insurance tax monies to this relief association and received a copy of this report:

Ms. Claudine M. Nagle
Secretary
Northern Cambria Borough

Ms. Becki Cattoi
Secretary
West Carroll Township

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.