

COMPLIANCE AUDIT

City of Pottsville Police Pension Plan Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania For the Period January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2018

October 2019



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 City Council
City of Pottsville
Schuylkill County
Pottsville, PA 17901

We have conducted a compliance audit of the City of Pottsville Police Pension Plan for the period January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2018. We also evaluated compliance with some requirements subsequent to that period when possible. 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 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 the plan member 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 benefit due to retired individuals and comparing these amounts to supporting documentation evidencing amounts determined and actually paid to recipients.
- We determined whether the January 1, 2015 and January 1, 2017 actuarial valuation reports were prepared and submitted by March 31, 2016 and 2018, 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 all annual special ad hoc postretirement reimbursements received by the municipality were authorized and appropriately deposited in accordance with Act 147 by tracing information to supporting documentation maintained by plan officials.

The City of Pottsville contracted with an independent certified public accounting firm for an audit of its basic financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2017, 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.

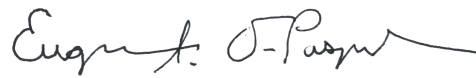
City officials are responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that the City of Pottsville Police Pension Plan is administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances 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 and as previously described, 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 procedures indicated that, in all significant respects, the City of Pottsville Police 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 the City of Pottsville 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.

October 10, 2019

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eugene A. DePasquale", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

EUGENE A. DEPASQUALE
Auditor General

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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 Pottsville Police Pension Plan is also governed by implementing regulations adopted by the former 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 67 - The Third Class City Code, Act of November 24, 2015 (P.L. 242, No. 67), as amended, 11 Pa. C.S. § 10101 et seq.
- Act 147 - Special Ad Hoc Municipal Police and Firefighter Postretirement Adjustment Act, Act of December 14, 1988 (P.L. 1192, No. 147), as amended, 53 P.S. § 896.101 et seq.

The City of Pottsville Police Pension Plan is a single-employer defined benefit pension plan locally controlled by the provisions of Ordinance No. 775, adopted pursuant to Act 67. The plan is also affected by the provisions of collective bargaining agreements between the city and its police officers. The plan was established January 1, 1965. Active members are required to contribute 5 percent of compensation to the plan. As of December 31, 2018, the plan had 24 active members, no terminated members eligible for vested benefits in the future, and 33 retirees receiving pension benefits from the plan.

BACKGROUND – (Continued)

As of December 31, 2018, selected plan benefit provisions are as follows:

Eligibility Requirements:

Normal Retirement	Pre 5/20/1985 - Age 50 and 20 years of service. Post 5/20/1985 - Age 50 & 25 years of service.
Early Retirement	None
Vesting	100% after 12 years of service.

Retirement Benefit:

50% of average monthly compensation based on final rate of compensation or highest 5 year average, if higher, plus an incremental pension (maximum \$300) of 1/40th of such pension amount for each year of service earned, prior to age 65 in excess of the minimum required for normal retirement.

Survivor Benefit:

Before Retirement Eligibility	Refund of member contributions without interest.
After Retirement Eligibility	50% of benefit to surviving spouse or child under 18. If killed in the line of duty 100% of benefit.

Disability Benefit:

Service Related	Benefit based on normal retirement benefit.
Non-Service Related	After 10 years of service – 50% of final average salary.

CITY OF POTTSVILLE POLICE PENSION PLAN
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
(UNAUDITED)

The supplementary information contained on Pages 3 and 4 reflects the implementation of GASB Statement No. 67, *Financial Reporting for Pension Plans*. The objective of this statement is to improve financial reporting by state and local governmental pension plans.

SCHEDULE OF CHANGES IN THE NET PENSION
LIABILITY AND RELATED RATIOS
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2015, 2016, 2017, AND 2018

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>
Total Pension Liability				
Service cost	\$ 233,832	\$ 245,524	\$ 238,498	\$ 250,423
Interest	985,694	1,008,382	1,035,596	1,068,276
Change of benefit terms	682,777	-	-	-
Difference between expected and actual experience	-	-	(398,952)	-
Changes of assumptions	-	-	417,772	-
Benefit payments, including refunds of member contributions	<u>(907,082)</u>	<u>(950,352)</u>	<u>(855,341)</u>	<u>(845,215)</u>
Net Change in Total Pension Liability	995,221	303,554	437,573	473,484
Total Pension Liability – Beginning	12,679,518	13,674,739	13,978,293	14,415,866
Total Pension Liability – Ending (a)	<u>\$ 13,674,739</u>	<u>\$ 13,978,293</u>	<u>\$ 14,415,866</u>	<u>\$ 14,889,350</u>
Plan Fiduciary Net Position				
Contributions – employer	\$ 531,374	\$ 556,397	\$ 574,773	\$ 574,773
Contributions – member	77,957	80,900	84,811	88,758
Net investment income	47,230	581,425	1,539,143	(641,371)
Benefit payments, including refunds of member contributions	(907,082)	(950,352)	(855,341)	(845,215)
Administrative expense	<u>(9,200)</u>	<u>(3,000)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(10,600)</u>
Net Change in Plan Fiduciary Net Position	(259,721)	265,370	1,343,386	(833,655)
Plan Fiduciary Net Position – Beginning	10,450,026	10,190,305	10,455,675	11,799,061
Plan Fiduciary Net Position – Ending (b)	<u>\$ 10,190,305</u>	<u>\$ 10,455,675</u>	<u>\$ 11,799,061</u>	<u>\$ 10,965,406</u>
Net Pension Liability – Ending (a-b)	<u>\$ 3,484,434</u>	<u>\$ 3,522,618</u>	<u>\$ 2,616,805</u>	<u>\$ 3,923,944</u>
Plan Fiduciary Net Position as a Percentage of the Total Pension Liability	74.5%	74.8%	81.9%	73.6%
Estimated Covered Employee Payroll	\$ 1,546,235	\$ 1,552,723	\$ 1,728,897	\$ 1,792,427
Net Pension Liability as a Percentage of Covered Employee Payroll	225.3%	226.9%	151.4%	218.9%

CITY OF POTTSVILLE POLICE PENSION PLAN
 SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
 (UNAUDITED)

Sensitivity Of The Net Pension Liability To Changes In The Discount Rate

The following presents the net pension liability of the city as of December 31, 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018, calculated using the discount rate of 7.5%, as well as what the city's net pension liability would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is 1 percentage-point lower or 1 percentage-point higher than the current rate:

	1% Decrease (6.5%)	Current Discount Rate (7.5%)	1% Increase (8.5%)
Net Pension Liability – 12/31/15	\$ 5,018,824	\$ 3,484,434	\$ 2,188,974
Net Pension Liability – 12/31/16	\$ 5,087,493	\$ 3,522,618	\$ 2,200,029
Net Pension Liability – 12/31/17	\$ 4,244,018	\$ 2,616,805	\$ 1,244,949
Net Pension Liability – 12/31/18	\$ 5,884,462	\$ 3,923,944	\$ 2,522,781

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
2009	\$ 310,888	\$ 310,888	\$ -		
2010	294,005	294,005	-		
2011	354,537	354,537	-		
2012	355,894	355,894	-		
2013	530,081	530,081	-		
2014	531,694	531,694	-	\$1,417,445	37.51%
2015	531,374	531,374	-	1,546,235	34.37%
2016	550,925	556,397	(5,472)	1,552,723	35.83%
2017	556,397	574,773	(18,376)	1,728,897	33.25%
2018	574,773	574,773	-	1,792,427	32.07%

* Due to GASB Statement No. 67, *Financial Reporting for Pension Plans*, being implemented only recently, the amount of Covered-Employee Payroll was not provided for years prior to 2014.

CITY OF POTTSVILLE 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, 2013, 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)
01-01-13	\$ 9,048,427	\$ 12,020,432	\$ 2,972,005	75.3%
01-01-15	10,450,026	13,362,295	2,912,269	78.2%
01-01-17	10,455,675	13,997,113	3,541,438	75.0%

CITY OF POTTSVILLE 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.

CITY OF POTTSVILLE POLICE 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, 2017
Actuarial cost method	Entry age normal
Amortization method	Level dollar
Remaining amortization period	14 years
Asset valuation method	Fair value
Actuarial assumptions:	
Investment rate of return	7.5%
Projected salary increases	5.0%

CITY OF POTTSVILLE POLICE PENSION PLAN
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Tom W. Wolf
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

The Honorable James T. Muldowney
Mayor

Mr. Mark Atkinson
Council Vice-President

Mr. Joseph Devine
Councilman

Ms. Dorothy Botto
Councilwoman

Mr. Edmund Jones
Councilman

Mr. Thomas Palamar
City Administrator

Ms. Lisa Kral
Chief Administrative Officer

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