

COMPLIANCE AUDIT

Hanover Borough Fire Drivers' Pension Plan York County, Pennsylvania

October 2024



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of the Auditor General

Timothy L. DeFoor • Auditor General



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**TIMOTHY L. DEFOOR
AUDITOR GENERAL**

The Honorable Mayor and Borough Council
Hanover Borough
York County
Hanover, PA 17331

We have conducted a compliance audit of the Hanover Borough Fire Drivers' Pension Plan 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:

- For the period January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023, we determined whether state aid was properly determined and deposited in accordance with Act 205 requirements by verifying the deposit date of state aid and determining whether deposits were made within 30 days of receipt for all years within the period under audit.

- For the period January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023, we determined whether 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 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.
- For the period January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023, we determined whether 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 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.
- For the period January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023, we determined whether retirement benefits calculated for the plan member who retired during the period noted 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 individual and comparing these amounts to supporting documentation evidencing amounts determined and actually paid to the recipient.
- We determined whether the January 1, 2023 actuarial valuation report was prepared and submitted by March 31, 2024 in accordance with Act 205 and whether selected information provided on this report 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.

Hanover Borough contracted with an independent certified public accounting firm for annual audits of its basic financial statements 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 Hanover Borough Fire Drivers' 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 Hanover Borough Fire Drivers' Pension Plan was administered in compliance with applicable state laws, regulations, contracts, administrative procedures, and local ordinances and policies for the periods noted above.

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 Hanover 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy L. DeFoor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the left of the first letter.

Timothy L. DeFoor
Auditor General
September 19, 2024

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 two 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 Hanover Borough Fire Drivers' 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 Hanover Borough Fire Drivers' Pension Plan is a single-employer defined benefit pension plan locally controlled by the provisions of Ordinance No. 2146, as amended. The plan is also affected by the provisions of collective bargaining agreements between the borough and its firefighters. The plan was established July 1, 1966. Active members are required to contribute 3.7 percent of compensation to the plan until they have reached the age of 62 and have 10 years of service. As of December 31, 2023, the plan had 15 active members, no terminated members eligible for vested benefits in the future, and 15 retirees receiving pension benefits from the plan.

HANOVER BOROUGH FIRE DRIVERS' 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, 2019, is as follows:

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Actuarial Valuation Date	Actuarial Value of Assets (a)	Actuarial Liability (AAL) - Entry Age (b)	Unfunded (Assets in Excess of) Actuarial Liability (b) - (a)	Funded Ratio (a)/(b)
01-01-19	\$ 6,255,158	\$ 7,541,626	\$ 1,286,468	82.9%
01-01-21	8,134,417	8,144,288	9,871	99.9%
01-01-23	8,293,846	8,551,651	257,805	97.0%

Note: The market value of the plan's assets at 01-01-23 have been adjusted to reflect the smoothing of gains and/or losses over a 5-year averaging period and will be limited to a maximum of 120 percent and a minimum of 80 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.

HANOVER BOROUGH FIRE DRIVERS' 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.

HANOVER BOROUGH FIRE DRIVERS' PENSION PLAN
 SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
 (UNAUDITED)

SCHEDULE OF CONTRIBUTIONS

<u>Year Ended December 31</u>	<u>Actuarially Determined Contribution</u>	<u>Actual Contributions</u>	<u>Contribution Deficiency (Excess)</u>	<u>Covered- Employee Payroll</u>	<u>Contributions as a Percentage of Covered- Employee Payroll</u>
2014	\$ 66,988	\$ 66,988	\$ -	\$ 962,980	6.96%
2015	64,277	64,277	-	1,020,433	6.30%
2016	37,805	37,805	-	1,080,471	3.50%
2017	46,440	46,440	-	1,081,258	4.29%
2018	42,787	42,787	-	1,208,992	3.54%
2019	158,627	158,627	-	1,287,145	12.32%
2020	165,976	165,976	-	1,342,704	12.36%
2021	314,968	314,968	-	1,377,379	22.87%
2022	150,791	150,791	-	1,221,774	12.34%
2023	151,629	151,629	-	1,332,166	11.38%

HANOVER BOROUGH FIRE DRIVERS' 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, 2023
Actuarial cost method	Entry age normal
Amortization method	Level dollar
Remaining amortization period	9 years
Asset valuation method	5-year smoothing - limited to a maximum of 120% and a minimum of 80% of the market value of assets.
Actuarial assumptions:	
Investment rate of return	7.0%
Projected salary increases	5.0%
Cost-of-living adjustments	None assumed

HANOVER BOROUGH FIRE DRIVERS' PENSION PLAN
REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST

This report was initially distributed to the following:

The Honorable Joshua D. Shapiro
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

The Honorable SueAnn Whitman
Mayor

Mr. William W. Reichart, II
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Ms. Margaret Lewis
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Mr. James Shelton
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