



**CITY OF DANBURY**  
**FIRE DEPARTMENT**  
**19 NEW STREET**  
**DANBURY, CONNECTICUT 06810**

**GEOFFREY HERALD, CFO, MS**  
FIRE DEPARTMENT

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23 June 2014

Mayor Mark D. Boughton  
City Council  
City of Danbury  
155 Deer Hill Ave.  
Danbury, Ct. 06810

**Re: Statement of Condition and Property, Danbury Fire Department  
City Code of Ordinances 8-13**

Dear Mayor Boughton and Members of the City Council,

In accordance with Section 8-13 of the City Charter the following report is offered as to the listing of property and a general statement of condition and affairs of the Department.

The Danbury Fire Department continues to operate as the largest combination Department in the State with five career and 12 volunteer stations. The City owns and maintains six of the volunteer stations, with the remainder owned by the respective Volunteer Fire Departments. The current table of organization represents 128 positions of the career department. As of this date we have 120 with one retirement pending. Current membership rosters of the 12 volunteer companies have approximately 120 certified suppression responders.

The fire department continues to hold the certificate of operation for the ambulance service and function in a first responder Advanced Life Support (ALS) Emergency Medical Service (EMS) modality. The ambulance and paramedic services are currently contracted to Danbury Health Care Associates. The

department hosts the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) for all 911 calls in Danbury. During 2013, our 9-1-1 PSAP received more than 44,000 calls. This resulted in 3,938 fire and service responses and an additional 4,771 “first responder” (medical) responses.

### **Facilities and Property**

The following City owned fire stations and facilities are currently in operation.

The Joseph J. Bertalovitz Fire Headquarters - 19 New Street

Melody/Halas Station 23 - Osborne Street

Commerce Park Station 24 - Eagle Road

West Side Station 26 – Kenosia Ave. Extension

Fire Training Center - Plumtrees Road

Padanaram Hose # 3 – North Street

Independent Hose # 4 - Hoyt Street

Wooster Hose # 5 - Coal Pit Hill Road

Citizens Hose # 6 - Jefferson Avenue

Water Witch # 7 - Locust Avenue

Phoenix Hose # 8 - Well Avenue

The Department maintains our long term lease agreement for Station 25 located on South King Street. This is a station leased to the City by the King Street Volunteer Company #14 on an annual basis. The current annual payment for this property is \$20,525.

The division of Community Risk Reduction Fire Marshal’s office operates out of City Hall. This division is responsible for fire prevention programs, public education, plan review, inspections, code enforcement and public risk reduction activities in the City of Danbury.

### **Status and Condition**

**All City fire stations are operable at this time.** We continue to work with the Public Buildings Department and private contractors on matters of repair and maintenance.

The **Fire Training Facility on Plumtrees Road** is available for drills and exercises. During the past year, the facility has seen much use by many agencies. These agencies include all 12 of the Danbury Volunteer companies and the career department. Other agencies that use the facility include the Danbury Police and many departments from our mutual aid partners and our region. Department members, public works and City engineers are currently working on additional improvements for the grounds. Additionally, 17 other communities have used our facility in training evolutions.

We continue our efforts to improve the facility. An initiative to expand our capabilities by acquiring propane fired training props has been successful. A donation from Doctor Robert Bedoukian under the auspices of the State of Connecticut Neighborhood Assistance Act has provided additional funding for this project. These props have proven very beneficial in our training environment.

Parking and safety improvements to Plumtrees Road are planned and these will further enhance the area. We continue to seek additional funding on the local, State and Federal levels for other training mock-ups and infrastructure. We have begun a process of research and actions to build our classroom structure at the site. With the allocation of \$300,000 from the city in capital improvement budget, we have initiated the process to create a structure which will serve our firefighters in the future.

**Fire Headquarters** continues to suffer severe space constraints. The need for additional conference rooms, training, office space and physical fitness training has increased. This is due to mandated training, record keeping and fitness requirements of our members. The addition of various apparatus and trailers required by the evolving demands on the fire service has stressed our vehicle storage capacity. This has reached severe levels. As a result, many

vehicles and trailers remain parked outside. Some are stored at the airport facility which is subject to the restrictions of the FAA and may be lost to us.

We completed an engineering study of the New Street Headquarters facility in 2012. This study determined the site and facility on New Street can be modified to accommodate a more modern facility with certain limitations. We believe the option to replace the building with a new structure on another site is still the best option. The site straddles a flood plain and the potential for rebuilding it is dependent on FEMA, EPA and local approvals. However, modifying Headquarters may be a reasonable way to gain some improvements without the necessary capital outlay of an entirely new structure.

In the Mayor's Task Force Report of 2010, a recommendation to construct a new engine house in the south end of the city was proposed. This would facilitate response to the area, a densely populated part of the city, currently served by Engine 22 from Headquarters. This station would ideally be situated in the area of Main and South Street to Shelter Rock stretch of South Street. With our current response model, this station may best be considered as desired rather than necessary.

The rapid growth and expansion of residential and businesses in the west side of the city and burgeoning demand for services there now creates a clearer view since even a couple of years ago. The needs for a station, including an engine company and an ambulance response capability, are now obvious. The City must consider a plan for this now, as the demand will continue to increase and will eventually over extend our current staffing and response capability.

**Station 23 on Osborne Street** is currently operating without major structural issues. All systems are operable. This building was completed nearly 21 years ago.

**Station 24 in Commerce Park** is currently operating as expected. This structure was constructed and donated to the city by Powers Construction in the 1970s. An engineering evaluation of the structure indicates that although there are some issues remaining, the structure is not at risk of imminent failure as was

our concern. We have completed the installation of a backup power generator at the station. All career stations now have backup generators.

**King Street Station 25** is operating out of the rented facility. This continues to meet the needs of the King Street district with the assignment of Engine 25. The facility, though connected to Engine 14, is independent with a backup emergency generator, diesel exhaust system and a separate septic system. The rental continues with a 20-year lease agreement for the use of the space from King St. Volunteer Company # 14.

**Station 26, West Side** – The West Side Fire Station on Kenosia Avenue housing Engine 26 is fully functional. This most recent addition to the Department was completed and opened in the early fall of 2007. This station and its strategic placement have proven very successful in addressing the needs on the west side of the city.

### **Radio and Dispatch Center**

At this writing, the City's Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) 9-1-1 Emergency Dispatch Center continues to operate out of the first floor of fire headquarters. Negotiations are underway with a private company, IXP, to civilianize the City of Danbury PSAP. This facility will be operated from the Police Headquarters on Main Street.

Many components of our radio system at Fire Headquarters and in the City have long exceeded their expected lifespan. This year we have continued to suffer breakdowns and failures of the operating components. We have been advised by contracted radio system engineers that many components are beyond further repair. Many need to be replaced as soon as possible, and due to technological improvements, some of these components are no longer appropriate and must be replaced with new devices.

Some new radio communications equipment and hardware have been specified and some components have been installed. Others are in the channel and delivery is expected shortly. The build out is necessary to ensure the safety of our firefighters and our citizens in the field. The Mayor and City Council have

allocated dedicated funding in the capital plan. This will be used to address acquisitions to rejuvenate our existing radio equipment in use by the Fire Department. This will be installed in the new facility on Main Street, the FCI, the Spruce Mountain Antenna site and in Fire Headquarters. Other additions will include new transmitters, antennae and receivers throughout our community. This will provide the greater level of customer service and care that our citizens deserve.

Working with the Police Department, Emergency Management and Public Works, the Fire Department is in discussion to develop a city wide radio system that will meet the needs of the city in the future. Building off research and a proposal from 2008, we are now near the end of developing a proposal. This proposal will be to build out our entire radio system, using what can be used of existing equipment, adding new and modern devices where necessary and appropriate, and finally creating a new and forward compatible system. The cost for these improvements will be upwards of \$7 million at today's prices. This will be brought to the Mayor and City Council for review in the coming months.

As we prepare to move our PSAP to the Police Headquarters on Main Street, we are ensuring the Fire Headquarters will maintain radio communications capability to ensure command and control of fire operations. Remaining dispatch and radio equipment, if supportable, may then provide a redundant emergency communications system as a back up to the primary communications system. However, keeping the current equipment in good working order is increasingly difficult.

### **Volunteer stations**

The following are brief reviews of the 6 Volunteer Fire Stations owned and maintained by the department. A recent change to State Statutes has allowed the City to establish work zones around our Fire Stations. This can be noted by the signs indicating the zones that have been installed. We still have many to install but these will hopefully alert drivers to the locations and possible movements of fire apparatus in the area.

**Volunteer Station #3 Padanaram** continues to operate on North Street. The building was constructed in 1950. This structure is in a poor location for a fire station, on a curve on a very busy street. There is inadequate parking and access to the station from the street is usually difficult due to traffic. Additionally, there are a number of repairs needed that will be costly. These include roof repairs and replacement of windows and casings. The fire escape needs removal, repair or replacement, as do the gutters of the structure. I recommend that this company along with Engine 5 and Squad 6 (described below) be moved to a new, modern station housing all three companies.

**Engine #5 Wooster Hose and Squad #6 Citizens** are currently operating. Functionally and cosmetically they remain antiquated and marginally meet the operating needs of the companies. Engine 5 on Coal Pit Hill was built in 1883 and Squad 6 in 1888. Additions were completed on Squad 6 after the 1955 flood (when the basement was filled in) and again in 1980. Some repairs have been completed but many others are needed.

Squad 6 has received a federal grant and has received a new truck. This truck had to be designed by the manufacturer to match the height of the garage of the building. The truck is shorter in height and longer in length than what would be a common design due to this situation. As a result, the truck was designed to fit the station rather than the mission for which it is needed. This is an unacceptable scenario and I urge the City to act to prevent this from recurring.

The main roof of #6 Citizens Hose was replaced a few years ago but the roof is now leaking. In 2013, the bay and entrance doors, windows and siding have been replaced. Asbestos siding abatement was completed in this process. Additional repairs such as new HVAC, boiler and insulation are needed to bring this building to reasonable condition. Though the recent repairs have kept the building habitable, the structure is over 120 years old and is not suitable for a modern fire station.

I recommend that these two stations be stricken from the City property lists and the property sold. These companies should be moved to a modern

consolidated station that will meet the needs of today's fire service and these dedicated volunteers.

**Volunteer Stations #4 Independent Hose on Hoyt Street and #7 Water Witch on Locust Avenue** currently are operating. Repairs to these two stations have been relatively minor. These stations, built in 1977 and 1992 respectively, are 37 and 22 years old and we expect an additional 20 years from these buildings without major failure. Some minor needs for roof repairs and indications that the boilers may be near the end of their serviceable life give warning to possible potential costs, however. We were able to replace a bay heater through cooperation of the city and the members of the company who did the installation. **Phoenix Hose #8** continues to operate from Well Ave. The building was built in 1958. This station is in good order generally. We were fortunate to be able to replace the original and deteriorating bay door with a modern insulated door this spring. This was possible due to the cooperation of the Mayor, the City Council and Deputy Finance Director Sue Kaminski who assisted in application and use of LOCIP funding for this critical repair. Other maintenance issues have been within expectations and the structure is sound. Minor repairs from storm damaged have been completed.

All of these volunteer stations owned by the City need electrical upgrades to improve efficiency and reduce costs. To that end we have been working with Eric Olsen of New England Energy Management, Inc. (NEEM). In this collaboration, NEEM has created a plan to improve our electrical usage by installation of energy efficient fixtures and bulbs. This program will also address similar issues in the career stations as well.

Additional engineering to correct heating and air conditioning issues will be needed to reduce operational costs as well. Restrictions on spending due to the fiscal pressures have made it increasingly difficult to improve and modernize these facilities. This is due to the age of the structures as well as the demands placed on the Department for new and more versatile apparatus.

Regarding the status of the volunteers' stations, I believe it prudent to continue to evaluate the usefulness of the existing buildings with an understanding that consolidation and replacement of the properties is needed. This is directed toward all of the quarters of the City Volunteer component. Four of these structures are over 50 years old. Though quaint in appearance, they are not at all suited for use by modern fire departments.

The Mayor's Task Force (2010) report on the facility needs of the Department has been used as a template to guide our planning. Recommendations of this report include property acquisitions, construction of new stations, or construction of a single larger structure housing multiple companies: i.e. 5, 6 and 7. When this is accomplished it would facilitate response by having the companies share quarters and cross train on the apparatus. A new station might also incorporate a state of the art training classroom and electronic teaching facilities. This resource is sorely needed as the educational requirements of the volunteers have greatly expanded and will continue to expand in the future. The economy of scale with reduction in number of structures and separate heating, cooling, and associated maintenance costs will benefit the financial wellbeing of the city. Sales of the various properties currently housing the volunteers would reduce the outlay by the City to complete the consolidation. An added benefit could be returning these properties to the tax rolls of the City.

### **Fleet Inventory and Condition**

The FY 2013-2014 capital budget provides for the acquisition of a new aerial ladder truck. The final Mayoral and Council approval was granted earlier this year. The aerial is currently under construction in Wisconsin. We would expect delivery in the fall, perhaps as early as late August. This aerial is vital to our operations and will replace a 15-year-old vehicle.

The Department continues to use standardized specifications for the fleet for better efficiency in training and maintenance. We have received the first of 5 vehicles replacing our aging sedan, SUV and pick up fleet. We acquired a new

vehicle for our Community Risk Reduction/Fire Marshal division, two command vehicles, and two pickup trucks.

Several State and Regional vehicles are in service here in the City. These include trailers for various purposes as well as a Hazardous Material Response Vehicle, a Heavy Rescue vehicle (Squad 1) and a state issued foam trailer through the state wide regional response plan. Certain command vehicles have been fixed with tow hitches and will play a role in our emergency plan by towing emergency trailers in times of disaster.

The continued replacement of fire apparatus is also necessary. With the good care that we provide, fire apparatus have a usual life span as a primary response unit of ten years. Efforts to reduce the use and wear on primary engines through the addition of smaller EMS response vehicles are proving successful. However, an engine will need replacement in the coming cycle and our second aerial is now at the end of its life as a first line apparatus as well. This second aerial ladder will need to be replaced within the next 2 fiscal years.

A chart detailing the complete vehicle inventory is appended at the end of this report.

## **Equipment**

The Department continues to purchase and replace equipment to meet the needs of an ever-evolving fire service. Over the last several years, the Department has received substantial funding and equipment from the City, private, State and Federal sources. As an example, the Department of Homeland Security has provided funding to assist Danbury in preparing for natural disasters and terrorist activity. The fire service industry has experienced a reduction in homeland security and preparation funding and increased competition for the existing funding. We will continue to apply for grants and to pursue other non-traditional sources. Previously awarded grant funding has made a dramatic impact in the quality of equipment the Department is using. The Mayor and City Council have continuously provided support to enhance

these initiatives. Working with the Finance Department to find funding is an ongoing process.

Additional acquisitions and funding initiatives include the following:

- The purchase of vehicle extrication equipment to meet the new materials and construction we encounter at accident scenes
- The continuing addition of technical rescue equipment and training for new hazards being encountered
- The continued scheduling of advanced rescue, WMD and National Incident Management classes both in-house and at the training academies to maintain our high level of preparedness
- The continued purchase and training of rope and other rescue equipment for low and high angle rescue situations
- The continued purchase and training of hazardous materials response equipment
- Additional or replacement of all front line Haz-mat metering and monitoring equipment
- The replacement of Fire Response Vehicles to ensure up to date equipment
- The replacement of Command and Administrative Staff vehicles to allow for towing of the various trailers
- Replacement of Community Risk Reduction/Fire Marshal vehicles

### **General Statement of Affairs**

The conventional operations of our Department are sound. With our modern equipment and current facilities, the Department will continue delivering quality emergency services. Funding for apparatus on the local level has been and continues to be directed to maintaining our capabilities and is appreciated. The continued support of the Mayor and City Council even in these demanding economic times has made a visible and positive functional difference in the Fire Department over the past several years. Our continued concern for facilities, fire

apparatus and radio infrastructure is our highest priority in the coming budget cycles. Due to the aging of the radio components, conditions are now considered critical and our replacement and improvement program to ensure continued safe operations is vital.

The Department continues to prepare and train for the prospect of future incidents related to the potential use of weapons of mass destruction. This includes encouraging attendance at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, MD. The emphasis is on classes pertaining to command and control and increasing safety education. Despite the challenge to our Department's response capabilities, we continue to explore all options on a local, regional and statewide level. The continued challenges will be in the arenas of preparedness, staffing and finance. We will continue to take advantage of training opportunities provided and funded by the Department of Homeland Security where and when available.

Grant opportunities will continue to be explored and pursued. The development of regional response initiatives is being earnestly encouraged by State and Federal agencies. We are participating on State and Regional levels for the benefit of our community. The State of Connecticut is putting forth plans to regionalize aspects of emergency response. This will potentially have a significant impact.

The status of our volunteer contingent remains a focus of concern, as this component is critical to the success in delivering quality service. Membership in the volunteers has remained steady over the past year. Consolidation is being explored and will be implemented when possible. Historically, in times of crisis, our volunteers have stepped forward to assist our community.

We must encourage our commitment to facility improvements and construction. There remains a concern on adequate staffing in working emergency incidents. The current City administration has addressed this with the construction and opening of the West Side station. This effort addressed a major shortcoming in our response coverage. However, OSHA safety standards and

NFPA recommendations and other regulatory entities has inevitably increased staffing requirements.

We have experienced with increasing concern the difficulties encountered with our current staffing levels. Our administrative staffing has not kept pace in matching the needs of our Department and the City. We need to increase staffing in our training, apparatus and administrative command functions. We must constantly assess the challenges of expanding our Department to meet the changing needs of the community. Areas of development both commercial and residential are stretching current resources, and analysis of future growth and services required to support these trends is indicating increased demands.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment as per section 8-13 of our Danbury Code of Ordinances. Your comments as to the format or considerations with regards to this report and our Department are appreciated. If you require any additional information please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Respectfully,

Geoffrey Herald  
Fire Chief

Danbury Fire Department  
Fleet Mileage and Condition  
May 15, 2014

	<i>Year</i>	<i>Make</i>	<i>Model</i>	<i>VIN #</i>	<i>Mileage</i>	<i>Hours</i>	<i>Condition</i>
52DA	85	Chevrolet	Step-van	1GBJP32M4F3315333	28207 +1		FPB-Poor
	97	Ford	Crown Victoria	2FALP71W0VX178445	104721 +2224		Out of Service
	97	Ford	Crown Victoria	2FALP71W2VX178446	88370 +0		Out of Service
	99	Chevrolet	Cavalier	1G1JC1243X7162197	23708 +0		Out of Service
44DA	01	Chevrolet	Tahoe	1GNEK13T11J217863	68521		Fair

Danbury Fire Department Statement of Condition

					+3261		
NA	96	Pierce	Sabre	4P1CT02U7TA000426	102575	10639	Out Of Service
NA	00	Pierce	Sabre	4P1CT02U6YA000232	92546 +39	10104 +2	Reserve-2 Poor
NA	00	Pierce	Dash	4P1CT02S8YA000750	39919 +2840	6059 +413	T2 Fair
NA	03	Pierce	Sabre	4P1CT02UX3A002798	99350 +3548	10084 +325	Reserve-1 Fair
NA	04	Pierce	Dash Platform	4P10D01H74A004530	66049 +4774	7619 +682	T-1 Fair
57DA	03	Ford	Pick-Up	1FTNX21L13EB32200	33265 +3397		Good
59DA	03	Ford	Taurus	1FAFP52U73G154371	67378 +4898		FPB Poor
142DA	03	Ford	Taurus	1FAFP52U53G154370	101683 +13057		FPB Poor
26DA	03	Ford	Taurus	1FAFP52U93G154369	87460 +6151		FPB Poor
51DA	03	Ford	Taurus	1FAFP52U73G154368	133069 +4354		FPB Poor
2247	03	Advanced Containment Systems Inc	Decon-Trailer	1A9VFLT2031247556	NA		Fair
317DA		Sullair	Compressor	004-142661	NA	33 +1	Good
297DA		Ingersol-Rand	Light Tower	342308JA0789	NA	251 +2	Good
313DA	01	5-Starr	Boat Trailer	5A4XJRJ1X12001639	NA		Good
	01	14' Quicksilver	Inflatable Boat/25HP	KR-USA99650F001	NA		Poor
29DA	89	Pennsylvania	Utility Trl.	1P9C614D2KL016559	NA		Poor
B.S.I. 2520	09	Ford	E-350	1FDWE35P09DA26375	58741 +13431		Good
B.S.I. 880	05	Ford	E-350	1FDWE35P85HA60616	112832 +14497		Poor
B.S.I. 135DA	08	Ford	Expedition XLT	1FMFU16568LA03482	33510 +2217		Good
B.S.I. 68DA	01	Ford	Crown Vic	2FAFP71W11X187226	84500 +2208		Fair
B.S.I. 2389	09	Ford	E-350	1FDWE35P09DA82431	57426 +9075		Good
2265	06	Freightliner	M2	1FVACXDAX6HV52384	4778 +393	404 +29	Excellent
60DA	06	Ford	Explorer	1FMFU73E46UA52724	50399 +8299		Fire Marshal Good
43DA	06	Ford	Explorer	1FMFU73E66UA52725	61129 +9363		FPB Good
145DA	06	Ford	Expedition	1FMFU16546LA50690	65978 +6471		FPB Good
250DA	06	Ford	Expedition	1FMFU16576LA83327	48190 +5655		Training Good

## Danbury Fire Department Statement of Condition

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258DA	06	Ford	Expedition	1FMPU16596LA83328	64773 +9571		E.M.S Good
N/A	06	Pierce	Dash	4P1CD01S76A006681	71117 +7073	7828 +724	E-24 Fair
N/A	06	John Deere	Gator	W06X411D005068		83 +12	Good
70-23	06	Fire 1	Foam Unit	1S9RT192160407186	N/A		Good
343DA	07	American	Trailer	5N6200E2681019781	N/A		Good
344DA	07	American	Trailer	5N6200G2271016808	N/A		Good
N/A	07	American	Trailer	5N6200G2471016809	N/A		Good
345DA	07	Alcom	Trailer	1A9BE16217W726759	N/A		Good
B.S.I 22DA	07	Ford	Expedition XLT	1FMFU16547LA34454	41927 +2949		Good
	07	International	4400	1HTMKAZR77H522397	4327 +83	329 +32	Excellent
N/A	07	Pierce	Dash	4P1CD01H77A007352	73516 +11914	6862 +1165	E-26 Fair
N/A	07	Pierce	Dash	4P1CD01H47A007700	11175 +3027	1710 +493	Squad -1 Excellent
N/A	08	Pierce	Dash	4P1CD01H48A007701	63245 +8812	6188 +679	E-25 Good
N/A	08	Pierce	Dash	4P1CD01H68A007702	69444 +10719	7481 +1197	E-23 Good
66DA	09	Ford	Expedition	1FMFK16569LA12397	25177 +5949		S.R.V. Good
69DA	11	Ford	Taurus	1FAHP2HW7BG107727	28325 +6667		Assist.Chief Excellent
N/A	10	Pierce	Arrow XT	4P1CA01H3AA011284	20167 +2239	2335 +218	E-21 Excellent
N/A	10	Pierce	Arrow XT	4P1CA01H5AA011285	35239 +11362	4145 +1287	E-22 Good
B.S.I. 142-NJW	11	Ford	Expedition XLT	1FMJU1G52BEF43402	20368 +6324		Excellent
251DA	12	Ford	Escape	1FMCU9C79CKC10261	24860 +10800		FPB Excellent
B.S.I 2309	11	Ford	E-350	1FDWE3FS9BDB20392	41043 +12094		Excellent
B.S.I. 883	12	Ford	E-350	1FDWE3FS0CDA81774	27137 +15023		Excellent
233DA	13	Ford	Taurus	1FAHP2H81DG222439	8472 +8472		Fire Chief Excellent
216DA	13	Ford	Escape	1FMCU9GX0DUD03427	6052 +6052		FPB Excellent
34DA	13	Ford	F-250	1FT7W2B60DEB04880	762 +762		New not in Service
56DA	13	Ford	F-250	1FT7X2B61DEB09972	2064 +2064		Apparatus Outstanding
54DA	13	Ford	Expedition	1FMJU1G57DEF46573	2687 +2687		Car-30 Excellent
B.S.I 802-NGM	13	Ford	E-350	1FDWE3FS7DDB14268	1757 +1757		New