



23

CITY OF DANBURY

FIRE DEPARTMENT

19 NEW STREET

DANBURY, CONNECTICUT 06810

Geoffrey R. Herald
Fire Chief

Phone 203-796-1555
Fax 203-796-1533

Mayor Mark D. Boughton
& Common Council
City of Danbury
155 Deer Hill Avenue
Danbury, CT. 06810

July 24, 2008

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

Dear Mayor Boughton and Members of the Common Council:

In accordance with Section 8-13 of the City Code, 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 privately owned. The current table of organizations represents 122 members of the career department. Current membership rosters of the 12 volunteer companies have 107 individuals exclusive of social and support members. The Fire Department continues to hold the certificate of operation for the Ambulance Service and Fire Responder program. The ambulance and paramedic services are currently contracted to the Danbury Health Systems, while the department continues to operate the first responder EMS response. The department is the Primary Service Answering Point (PSAP) for all 911 calls in the City.

Facilities and Property

The following City owned Fire Stations and facilities are currently in operatio:

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. Ext.

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 also has a rental agreement for Station 25 located on South King Street. This rent is paid to the King Street Volunteer Company #14 on an annual basis. The Fire Marshal's office operates out of office space at City Hall. The Division, responsible for Prevention, Public Education and Inspection continues to operate under the jurisdiction of the Fire Department.

Status and Condition

All City owned 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** is available and open for drills and exercises at the present time. Since the rebuilding of the burn building much use has been made of the facility by our Department as well as our mutual aid partners. Department members and City engineers are currently working on additional improvements for the grounds. Improved parking and safety improvements to Plumtrees Road, some of which are completed, will further enhance the area. We are awaiting the completion of a concrete pad at the facility for automobile extrication training. We continue to seek additional funding on the State and Federal level for additions of a permanent classroom building and training mock-ups. We have recently completed the water and sewer connections to our temporary trailer classroom.

Fire Headquarters continues to suffer severe space constraints. The addition of equipment via Homeland Security grants and new purchases by the City has stressed our bay capacity. This is now reaching severe levels. As a result, several vehicles remain parked outside of the building. Many living area improvements have been completed in this structure which is nearly 40-years old. A project to modernize our classroom, a converted locker room, is progressing. Funding for this renovation is currently being developed through donations.

Station 23 Osborne Street is currently operating without major structural issues. All systems are operable. Problems with gutter damage by snow build up on the metal roof have been largely corrected by repairs and the Public Buildings Department.

Station 24 Commerce Park is currently operating. The City Engineering department continues to evaluate sinking areas of the landscaped property and issues of concrete block separation. An engineering evaluation of the structure is being completed at this writing. The driveway and parking areas, scheduled for replacement 2 years ago have yet to be repaired. This is now a grave situation as the driveways at Engine 24 are in very poor condition.

King Street Station 25 is operating out of their facility as of June 24, 2006. This facility meets the needs of the King Street district with the full time crew of Engine 25. The facility is complete with a back-up emergency generator, diesel exhaust system and a new septic system. The City will continue to rent the space from King St. Volunteer Company # 14.

Station 26, West Side – The new West Side Fire Station housing Engine 26 opened with a ceremony on 11 September 2007. This station has been built on a City owned site off of Kenosia Avenue extension, which was selected as the most strategic location for this facility. This deployment has had an immediate and profound impact on life safety on the West Side of the City.

911 PSAP Emergency Dispatch Center continues to operate out of the first floor of fire headquarters. Advancements in technology within the communications arena have long ago rendered this facility obsolete, and relocation needs are even more immediate than have been identified in the past. Radios in operation have reached the end of their life cycle and many parts must be replaced as soon as possible. Parts to maintain these units are no longer available and a failure will be catastrophic. This could potentially result in a total loss of paging communications with the volunteers and greatly impact life safety for our citizens. This equipments' condition is so marginal that the people who installed it many years ago are recommending that we not try to move it to the new Police Headquarters facility on Main Street. This site at Fire Headquarters will need to be maintained until a permanent location within the new Police facility is fully operable. The remaining equipment, if supported, will then provide a redundant emergency communications system as a back up to the primary communications system.

Volunteer Stations # 3 Padanaram, #5 Wooster, #6 Citizens and # 8 Phoenix are currently operating without major structural difficulties. Functionally and cosmetically they remain antiquated and marginally meet the operating needs of the companies. Some repairs have been completed but others are pending. Additional roof repairs to Citizens Hose and some window repairs may be needed. The main roof of #6 Citizens Hose was replaced a couple of years ago.

Volunteer Stations # 4 Independent Hose and #7, Water Witch currently are operating. Repairs on these two stations have been relatively minor last year.

Regarding the status of the volunteers' stations, as Chief I believe it to be prudent to continue to evaluate the usefulness of the existing volunteer fire houses with an eye toward consolidation and replacement of the properties. This is directed toward all of the quarters of the City Volunteer component. Each of these structures is quite old and though quaint in appearance, they are not at all suited for use by modern fire departments. I recommend a committee be formed to investigate the purchase of property on the south

side of town and construction of a single structure housing at least these companies: 5, 6 and 7. This would facilitate the response by having the companies share quarters and cross train on the apparatus. A new station could also incorporate a state of the art training class room and electronic teaching facilities. This resource is sorely needed as the educational requirements of the volunteers has greatly expanded and will continue to expand in the future. Sales of the various properties currently housing the volunteers would greatly reduce the total outlay by the city to complete the consolidation.

Fleet Inventory and Condition

Apparatus and fleet vehicles owned by the department are detailed below. **Our current fleet is fully operational at this time.** The department continues to use standardized specifications for the fleet for better efficiency in training and maintenance. Several new vehicles have been placed in service over the past year. Certain command vehicles have been fixed with tow hitches and will play a roll in our emergency plan by towing emergency trailers in times of disaster.

A new pumper was assigned as Engine 26 for the new West Side Station 26 and was made operational in September of 2007. Two other pumpers were placed in service later in the fall as 21 and 23 Engines, allowing us to reserve two units as replacements. In addition, we have placed in service several trailers for various purposes as well as a Hazardous Material Response Vehicle, a Heavy Rescue type vehicle (Squad 1) and a state issued foam trailer through the state wide regional response plan.

In the near future we will be retiring and replacing three of our oldest sedans with new vehicles. These will be used by the Command Staff and Fire Marshals.

Marker#	Year	Make	Model	VIN #	Mileage	Hours	Condition
52DA	85	Chevrolet	Step-van	1GBJP32M4F3315333	28156		FPB-Fair
351DA	93	Chevrolet	Lumina	2G1WL54T3P9232877	82853		FPB-Poor
54DA	95	Chevrolet	Tahoe	1GNEK13K7SJ413654	96564		Backup C30-Fair
34DA	97	Ford	Crown Victoria	2FALP71W0VX178445	47302		Fair
43DA	97	Ford	Crown Victoria	2FALP71W2VX178446	53518		Fair
251DA	99	Chevrolet	Cavalier	1G1JC1242X7162093	59700		Good
216DA	99	Chevrolet	Cavalier	1G1JC1243X7162197	20133		Good
66DA	99	Chevrolet	Cavalier	1G1JC124XX7161340	52602		Good
44DA	01	Chevrolet	Tahoe	1GNEK13T11J217863	52286		Good
NA	94	Pierce	Arrow	4P1CA02D2SA000127	97884	11494	Reserve Poor
NA	96	Pierce	Sabre	4P1CT02U7TA000426	95600	9962	Reserve Fair
NA	00	Pierce	Sabre	4P1CTO2U6YA000232	75643	8321	Reserve Good
NA	00	Pierce	Sabre	4P1CTO2U5YA000237	74331	8782	E24-Good
NA	00	Pierce	Dash	4P1CT02S8YA000750	29984	4178	T2- Good
NA	03	Pierce	Sabre	4P1CT02UX3A002798	58808	6271	E25-Good
NA	04	Pierce	Dash Platform	4P10D01H74A004530	18466	2476	T1- Excellent
29DA	03	Ford	Pick-Up	1FTNX21L13EB32200	8285		Excellent
59DA	03	Ford	Taurus	1FAFP52U73G154371	30631		FPB-

142DA	03	Ford	Taurus	1FAFP52U53G154370	31893		Good
26DA	03	Ford	Taurus	1FAFP52U93G154369	43749		FPB-Good
51DA	03	Ford	Taurus	1FAFP52U73G154368	57364		EMS-Good
2247	03	Advanced Containment Systems Inc	Decon-Trailer	1A9VFLT2031247556	NA		Training-Good
317DA		Sullair	Compressor	004-142661	NA		Good
297DA		Ingersol-Rand	Light Tower	342308JA0789	NA		Good
313DA	01	5-Starr	Boat Trailer	5A4XJRJ1X12001639	NA		Good
	01	14' Quicksilver	Inflatable Boat/25HP	KR-USA99650F001	NA		Good
56DA	89	Pennsylvania	Utility Trl.	1P9C614D2KL016559	NA		Good
B.S.I. 2520	93	Ford	E-350	1FDKE30M7PHA42798	144710		Fair
B.S.I. 880	05	Ford	E-350	1FDWE35P85HA60616	34514		Excellent
B.S.I. 883	05	Ford	E-350	1FDWE35P35HA60619	35303		Excellent
B.S.I. 135DA	08	Ford	Expedition	1FMFU16568LA03482	2000		Excellent
B.S.I. 68DA	01	Ford	Crown Vic	2FAFP71W11X187226	58002		Good
B.S.I. 1274	00	Ford	E-350	1FDWE35F7YHA72672	95201		Fair
B.S.I. 2309	01	Ford	E-350	1FDWE35F21HB34162	80641		Good
2265	06	Freightliner	M2	1FVACXDAX6HV52384	2138	140	Excellent
60DA	06	Ford	Explorer	1FMEU73E46UA52724	8174		Excellent
69DA	06	Ford	Explorer	1FMEU73E66UA52725	7368		Excellent
145DA	06	Ford	Expedition	1FMFU16546LA50690	11856		Excellent
250DA	06	Ford	Expedition	1FMFU16576LA83327	8741		Excellent
258DA	06	Ford	Expedition	1FMFU16596LA83328	5425		Excellent
N/A	06	Pierce	Dash	4P1CD01S76A006681	7993	769	E-22
N/A	06	John Deere	Gator	W06X411D005068		20	Excellent
70-23	06	Fire 1	Foam Unit	1S9RT192160407186	N/A		Excellent
344DA	07	American	Trailer	5N6200G2271016808	N/A		Excellent
N/A	07	American	Trailer	5N6200G2471016809	N/A		Excellent
345DA	07	Alcom	Trailer	1A9BE16217W726759	N/A		Excellent
B.S.I. 22DA	07	Ford	Expedition	1FMFU16547LA34454	343		Excellent
	07	International	4400	1HTMKAZR77H522397	3070	81	Excellent
N/A	07	Pierce	Dash	4P1CD01H77A007352	8396	684	E-26
N/A	08	Pierce	Dash	4P1CD01H47A007700			Excellent
N/A	08	Pierce	Dash	4P1CD01H48A007701			M.P.E.R.V. New
							E-21

N/A	08	Pierce	Dash	4P1CD01H68A007702			Excellent E-23 Excellent
-----	----	--------	------	-------------------	--	--	--------------------------------

Equipment

The department continues to purchase and replace equipment to meet the needs of an ever evolving fire service. The department has received substantial funding and equipment from the City, State and Federal sources in the last few years. As an example the Department of Homeland Security has provided funding to assist our City in preparing for natural disasters and terrorist activity. The information available today however indicates reductions in homeland security and preparation funding. We will continue to apply for grants and to pursue other non traditional funding sources. Previously awarded grant funding has made a dramatic impact in the quality of equipment the department is using. The Mayor and Common Council have continuously provided support to enhance these initiatives.

Additional acquisitions and initiatives include the following:

1. The recent replacement of protective clothing for firefighters to a new higher-grade material and construction. We completed the expenditure of this grant this spring, providing two full sets of turn out gear to the Career Department members.
2. The continued purchase of vehicle extrication equipment to meet the new materials and construction we encounter at accident scenes.
3. The continuing addition of technical rescue equipment and training for new hazards being encountered.
4. The continued scheduling of advanced rescue, WMD and National Incident Management classes in an in-house format to maintain our high level of preparedness.
5. The continued purchase and training of rope and other rescue equipment for low and high angle rescue situations.
6. The continued purchase and training of hazardous materials response equipment. The upgrade of the Department response to an actual technician team continues to evolve on a Regional level.
7. The delivery and implementation of two Multi casualty trailers as well as other vehicles to enhance our capabilities to better serve the community.
8. The replacement and repair of all front line Haz-mat metering and monitoring equipment.
9. The replacement of Fire Response Vehicles to ensure up to date equipment
10. The replacement of Command Staff vehicles to allow for towing of the various trailers and upgrading of Fire Marshals 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 greatly appreciated. The support of the City Administration and Common Council has made a visible and functional difference in the Fire Department over the past several years. Our concern for facilities and radio infrastructure will be our highest priority in the coming budget cycles. Due to the aging of the radio components, conditions are now considered critical and replacement must occur soon to ensure continued safe operations.

The Department continues to prepare and train for the prospect of future incidents related to the potential use of weapons of mass destruction. Despite the challenge to our Department's response capabilities we will continue to explore all options on a local regional and State wide 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 diligently. The development of certain 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 status of our volunteer contingent remains a focus of concern, as this component is critical to the success of delivering quality service. Membership in the volunteers has remained steady over the past year. Initiatives of consolidation and Civil Service incentives are being explored and implemented when possible. A benefit for volunteer firefighters has been restored, with volunteers receiving points based on training and commitment to the fire service added to the entry level testing scores. The most recent initial eligibility list failed to yield the numbers of local volunteers we expected. Historically, in times of crisis our volunteers have stepped forward to assist our community. We must encourage this commitment.

There remains a concern on adequate staffing in working emergency incidents. Combined with the development of our volunteer contingent, the City must work to understand in greater detail the need for additional staffing on a regular basis. The current administration has noted this concern and the opening of the Westside station will address a major shortcoming in our response. OSHA safety standards and National agency recommendations will inevitably increase minimum staffing levels. We have seen with increasing frequency the difficulties encountered with our current minimum staffing levels. As the seventh largest City in the State, 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 vital.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment as per section 8-13 of our City 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