



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

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August 25, 2015

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 twelve 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 113 personnel. 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 Western CT Health Network.

On March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015, the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) center for the City of Danbury was relocated from the previous location of Fire Headquarters at 19 New Street to Police Headquarters located at 375 Main Street. This relocation included moving all 911 telephone lines, server equipment, and computer terminals associated with the answering and processing of all 911 calls made within the City of Danbury. During 2014, our 9-1-1 PSAP received more

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than 44,000 calls. This resulted in 4,332 fire and service responses and an additional 5,248 “first responder” (medical) responses.

This date also included the transition of personnel answering the 911 calls to a privately held company called IXP Corporation. IXP is a technology company based out of Princeton, NJ. All 911 calls are now being answered, processed and managed by IXP employees in the Dispatch Center located at Police Headquarters. IXP is also providing the Dispatch function for the City of Danbury for EMS, Fire, and Police units.

### **Facilities and Property**

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

Joseph J. Bertalovitz Fire Headquarters – 19 New Street

Melody/Halas Station #23 – 210 Osborne Street

Commerce Park Station #24 – 36 Eagle Road

West Side Station #26 – 75 Kenosia Avenue Extension

Fire Training Center – 23 Plumtrees Road

Padanaram Hose #3 – 17 North Street

Independent Hose #4 – 37 Hoyt Street

Wooster Hose #5 – 7 Coal Pit Hill Road

Citizens Hose #6 – 65 Jefferson Avenue

Water Witch #7 – 37 Locust Avenue

Phoenix Hose #8 – 14 Well Avenue

### **Career Facilities**

**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** at 23 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

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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 have begun the process to build our classroom structure at the site. With the allocation of funds from the City in the capital improvement budget, we will create a structure which will serve our firefighters in the future. The new classroom building will include two classrooms, office and break room space, two truck bays, and unique features for firefighter training. This much needed facility replaces an old trailer used as a classroom and will complement the burn building and other training props on site.

**Fire Headquarters** at 19 New Street continues to suffer severe space constraints. The need for additional conference rooms, office space, apparatus and equipment storage, and physical fitness training has increased. This is due to mandated record keeping, maintenance, 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 and 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 Headquarters facility in 2012. This study determined the site and structure can be modified to accommodate a more modern fire station with certain limitations. We believe the option to replace the building with a new structure at another location 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 the existing 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. The 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 addition and expansion of residential and commercial properties in the west side of the city places a burgeoning demand for services and creates a clearer view since even a couple of years ago. The need for a station hosting both an engine company and an ambulance is now obvious. The City must consider a plan for this now, as the growth in this area will eventually over extend our current staffing and response capability.

**Melody Halas Station 23** at 210 Osborne Street is currently operating without major structural issues. All systems are operable. This building was completed nearly 22 years ago. Capital project funding will allow the repair of the brick façade, which is failing and creates a hazard.

**Commerce Park Station 24** at 36 Eagle Road is currently operating as expected. This structure was constructed and donated to the city by Powers Construction in the 1970s. Funding to replace the roof and repair interior damage has been provided in the capital projects budget.

**King Street Station 25** at 171 South King Street is operating out of rented space with a 20-year lease agreement from King St. Volunteer Company #14. The current annual payment for this property is \$21,550. The career portion of the building is independent with a backup emergency generator, diesel exhaust system, and a separate septic system.

**West Side Station 26** at 75 Kenosia Avenue Extension is fully functional and is the most recent addition to the Department, opening in the fall of 2007.

### **Radio and Dispatch Center**

The City's Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) 9-1-1 Emergency Dispatch Center is now operating out of Police Headquarters on Main Street. Consolidated dispatch operations of the City's emergency services are operated by civilians employed with our contracted vendor, IXP Corp.

New communications equipment and hardware have been installed. This radio 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. Installations have been completed in the new Dispatch facility on Main Street, the FCI, the Spruce Mountain Antenna site, and in Fire Headquarters. We are in the process of fortifying the communications system and adding simulcast sites to transmit and receive radio frequencies.

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. We have received approximately \$1 million from a City-wide bond to begin this project.

### **Volunteer stations**

The following are brief reviews of the 6 Volunteer Fire Stations owned and maintained by the department.

**Padanaram Hose Co #3** operates at 17 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 roadway 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.

**Wooster Hose Co #5** and **Citizens Hose Co #6** are currently operating. Functionally and cosmetically they remain antiquated and marginally meet the operating needs of the companies. Engine 5 at 7 Coal Pit Hill was built in 1883 and Squad 6 at 65 Jefferson Ave 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.

The main roof of #6 Citizens Hose was replaced a few years ago but the roof is now leaking. 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.

**Independent Hose #4** at 37 Hoyt Street and **Water Witch #7** at 37 Locust Avenue currently are operating. Repairs to these two stations have been relatively minor. These stations, built in 1977 and 1992 respectively, are 38 and 23 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.

**Phoenix Hose #8** continues to operate from 14 Well Ave. The building was built in 1958. This station is in good order generally.

Additional engineering to correct heating and air conditioning issues will be needed to reduce operational costs. Restrictions on spending due to 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. When this is accomplished it would facilitate response by having the companies share quarters and cross train on the apparatus. 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 and return these properties to the tax rolls.

### **Fleet Inventory and Condition**

The new aerial ladder truck was received, outfitted, and placed in service. We are investigating a rehab and retrofit of the older aerial to extend its lifespan and save on repair and replacement costs.

The Department continues to use standardized specifications for the fleet for better efficiency in training and maintenance. We have received two new vehicles for the Fire Marshals in our efforts of replacing our aging sedan, SUV and pick up fleet. We also acquired a new rescue boat with sturdier features. 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 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, two engines 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.

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:

- Vehicle extrication equipment to meet the new materials and construction we encounter at accident scenes
- Technical rescue equipment and training for new hazards being encountered
- Replacement of turnout gear and other Personal Protective Equipment
- Scheduling of advanced rescue, WMD and National Incident Management classes both in-house and at the training academies
- Purchase and training of rope and other rescue equipment for low and high angle rescue situations
- Purchase and training of hazardous materials response equipment
- Additional or replacement of all front line HazMat metering and monitoring equipment
- Replacement of Fire Response Vehicles to ensure up to date equipment
- 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 modern equipment and current facilities, the Department will deliver quality emergency services. Funding for apparatus on the local level maintains our capabilities and is appreciated. The 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. Our concerns for facilities, fire apparatus and radio infrastructure are the highest priority in the coming budget cycles. Due to aging

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radio components, conditions are now considered critical and our replacement and improvement program to ensure safe operations is vital.

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

Respectfully,

T. J. Wiedl  
Fire Chief

Danbury Fire Department  
Fleet Mileage and Condition  
2015

	<b>Year</b>	<b>Make</b>	<b>Model</b>	<b>VIN #</b>	<b>Mileage</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Condition</b>
52DA	85	Chevrolet	Step-van	1GBJP32M4F3315333	28207 +1		FPB-Poor
44DA	01	Chevrolet	Tahoe	1GNEK13T11J217863	68521 +3261		Fair
NA	96	Pierce	Sabre	4P1CT02U7TA000426	102575	10639	Out Of Service
NA	00	Pierce	Sabre	4P1CTO2U6YA000232	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	Truck out of Service
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
	03	Ford	Taurus	1FAFP52U93G154369	87460 +6151		Out Of Service
51DA	03	Ford	Taurus	1FAFP52U73G154368	133069 +4354		FPB Poor
2247	03	Advanced Containment	Decon- Trailer	1A9VFLT2031247556	NA		Fair

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		Systems Inc					
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		Out Of Service
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	1FMEU73E46UA52724	50399 +8299		Fire Marshal Good
43DA	06	Ford	Explorer	1FMEU73E66UA52725	61129 +9363		FPB Good
145DA	06	Ford	Expedition	1FMFU16546LA50690	65978 +6471		FPB Good
250DA	06	Ford	Expedition	1FMFU16576LA83327	48190 +5655		Training Good
258DA	06	Ford	Expedition	1FMFU16596LA83328	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	6862	E-26

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					+11914	+1165	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 1	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
N/A	14	Pierce	Arrow XT	4P1BCAGF4FA014901	1350		T-1 New
26DA	15	Ford	Escape	1FMCU9GX1FUC82669	31		New
	15	14' Quicksilver	Inflatable Boat/25HP	USA49858L415			New
	16	Ford	Explorer	1FM5K8B80GGA37161	79		New