101

CITY OF DANBURY

FIRE DEPARTMENT

19 NEW STREET

DANBURY, CONNECTICUT 06810

Geoffrey Herald
Fire Chief

Phone 203-796-1555
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June 30, 2009

Mayor Mark D. Boughton
Common 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 Common 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 privately owned. The current table of organization represents 123 positions of the career department. As of this date we have 118. Current membership rosters of the 12 volunteer companies have 107 certified individuals exclusive of social and support members.

The fire department continues to hold the certificate of operation for the ambulance service and first responder program. The ambulance and paramedic services are currently contracted to Danbury Health Systems. The department continues to operate in a first responder ALS EMS mode. The department is the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) for all 911 calls in the City.

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 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 current annual payment for this property is $20,525.
The Fire Marshal's Bureau operates out of offices at City Hall. The Bureau is responsible for Prevention, Public Education and Inspection 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 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. Over the past year, we have added light poles and put wiring under ground so as to allow for more aerial operations. Improved parking and safety improvements to Plumtrees Road, some of which are completed, will further enhance the area. We continue to seek additional funding on the local, State and Federal levels for a permanent classroom building and training mock-ups.

Fire Headquarters continues to suffer severe space constraints. The addition of various apparatus and trailers through Homeland Security grants, state issuance and new purchases by the City has stressed our under roof storage capacity. This has reached severe levels. As a result, many vehicles and trailers remain parked out side of the buildings in the weather. 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 expected to be completed in July. The electronics, HVAC system and construction are complete as of this writing. Funding for this renovation has been received through a very generous donation from Bedoukian Research Inc.

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 private engineering firm hired to evaluate sinking areas of the landscaped property and issues of concrete block separation has been completed. This evaluation of the structure indicates that though there are some serious and several less serious issues, the structure is not at risk of imminent failure as was our concern. The driveway and parking areas, long in need of replacement have been fully restored. This was accomplished through the very generous donation of Bill Stanley of American Pavement Specialists. He donated the labor and machines to complete the project, there by saving the city nearly $14,000 in labor costs.

King Street Station 25 is operating out of the rented facility. This facility continues to meet 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 has a long term agreement for the space from King St. Volunteer Company # 14.

Station 26, West Side – The West Side Fire Station housing Engine 26 continues to operate. This station is on a City owned site off of Kenosia Avenue extension. This deployment has had a significant and profound impact on life safety on the West Side of the City.

911 PSAP and Emergency Dispatch Center continue 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. New equipment has been installed in the new Police Department headquarters but is not currently being used as the PSAP by the Fire Department. E-911 equipment in use at Fire HQ should be moved promptly to provide the greatest level of customer service and care.

Radios and components in operation at Headquarters have reached the end of their life cycle. In June of 2009, a major component of the dispatching system was acquired and installed. To ensure the continued operation many other parts must be replaced as soon as possible. Components to repair and maintain this facility are no longer readily available and a failure will be catastrophic. 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 few years ago.

Volunteer Stations # 4 Independent Hose and #7, Water Witch currently are operating. Repairs to 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 but for one and though quaint in appearance, they are not at all suited for use by modern fire departments. A committee has been 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. Adding the other three companies and putting all six City Volunteers in a single facility will result in the best scenario for cost savings.

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. An added benefit would be returning these properties to the tax roles of the city.

Fleet Inventory and Condition

Apparatus and fleet vehicles owned by the department are detailed below. The department continues to use standardized specifications for the fleet for better efficiency in training and maintenance. A new vehicle as Car 1 (Chief) was 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.

Several State and Region vehicles are in service here in the City. Several trailers for various purposes as well as a Hazardous Material Response Vehicle, a Heavy tow vehicle (Squad 1) and a state issued foam trailer through the state wide regional response plan.

In the near future we hope to retire and replace three of our oldest sedans with new vehicles. These will be used by the Command Staff and Fire Marshals. The replacement of fire apparatus is also necessary. With good care which we provide, fire apparatus have a usual life span as a primary response unit of ten years. We will need to replace two vehicles in the very near future. Due to the exigencies of current fiscal pressures, this is a daunting task.

Marker#	*Year*	*Make*	*Model*	*VIN #*	*Mileage*	*Hours*	*Condition*
52DA	85	Chevrolet	Step-van	1GBJP32M4F3315333	28950		FPB-Fair
351DA	93	Chevrolet	Lumina	2G1WL54T3P9232877	82872		FPB-Poor
54DA	95	Chevrolet	Tahoe	1GNEK13K7SJ413654	102395		Backup C30-Fair
34DA	97	Ford	Crown Victoria	2FALP71WOVX178445	53943		Fair
43DA	97	Ford	Crown Victoria	2FALP71W2VX178446	66462		Fair
251DA	99	Chevrolet	Cavalier	1G1JC1242X7162093	69002		Good
216DA	99	Chevrolet	Cavalier	1G1JC1243X7162197	21563		Good
66DA	99	Chevrolet	Cavalier	1G1JC124XX7161340	52602		Out of Service
44DA	01	Chevrolet	Tahoe	1GNEK13T11J217863	61202		Good
NA	94	Pierce	Arrow	4P1CA02D2SA000127	99609	11689	Out of Service
NA	96	Pierce	Sabre	4P1CT02U7TA000426	102266	10596	Reserve Fair
NA	00	Pierce	Sabre	4P1CTO2U6YA000232	85443	9339	Reserve Fair
NA	00	Pierce	Sabre	4P1CTO2U5YA000237	90040	10582	E24-Fair
NA	00	Pierce	Dash	4P1CT02S8YA000750	31279	4560	T2-Good
NA	03	Pierce	Sabre	4P1CT02UX3A002798	75955	7875	E25-Good
NA	04	Pierce	Dash Platform	4P10D01H74A004530	28745	3924	T1-Good
29DA	03	Ford	Pick-Up	1FTNX21L13EB32200	13933		Good
59DA	03	Ford	Taurus	1FAFP52U73G154371	43941		FPB-Good
142DA	03	Ford	Taurus	1FAFP52U53G154370	41378		FPB-Good
26DA	03	Ford	Taurus	1FAFP52U93G154369	56615		FPB Good
51DA	03	Ford	Taurus	1FAFP52U73G154368	69423		FPB Good
2247	03	Advanced Containment Systems Inc	Decon-Trailer	1A9VFLT2031247556	NA		Fair
317DA		Sullair	Compressor	004-142661	NA	22	Good
297DA		Ingersol-Rand	Light Tower	342308JA0789	NA	78	Good
313DA	01	5-Starr	Boat Trailer	5A4XJRJ1X12001639	NA		Good
	01	14' Quicksilver	Inflatable Boat/25HP	KR-USA99650F001	NA		Fair
56DA	89	Pennsylvania	Utility Trl.	1P9C614D2KL016559	NA		Good
B.S.I. 2520	93	Ford	E-350	1FDKE30M7PHA42798	148202		Poor
B.S.I. 880	05	Ford	E-350	1FDWE35P85HA60616	61515		Good
B.S.I. 883	05	Ford	E-350	1FDWE35P35HA60619	61736		Good
B.S.I. 135DA	08	Ford	Expedition	1FMFU16568LA03482	12674		Excellent
B.S.I. 68DA	01	Ford	Crown Vic	2FAFP71W11X187226	71945		Good

B.S.I. 1274	00	Ford	E-350	1FDWE35F7YHA72672	112717		Fair
B.S.I. 2309	01	Ford	E-350	1FDWE35F21HB34162	101595		Fair
2265	06	Freightliner	M2	1FVACXDAX6HV52384	2784	219	Excellent
60DA	06	Ford	Explorer	1FMEU73E46UA52724	18609		FPB Excellent
69DA	06	Ford	Explorer	1FMEU73E66UA52725	22054		Excellent
145DA	06	Ford	Expedition	1FMPU16546LA50690	26029		Good
250DA	06	Ford	Expedition	1FMPU16576LA83327	19986		Training Excellent
258DA	06	Ford	Expedition	1FMPU16596LA83328	21929		E.M.S Excellent
N/A	06	Pierce	Dash	4P1CD01S76A006681	26087	2855	E-22 Excellent
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	10502		Excellent
	07	International	4400	1HTMKAZR77H522397	3419	127	Excellent
N/A	07	Pierce	Dash	4P1CD01H77A007352	19239	1601	E-26 Excellent
N/A	08	Pierce	Dash	4P1CD01H47A007700	3226	336	Squad -1 Excellent
N/A	08	Pierce	Dash	4P1CD01H48A007701	14383	1570	E-21 Excellent
N/A	08	Pierce	Dash	4P1CD01H68A007702	12848	1293	E-23 Excellent
66DA	09	Ford	Expedition	1FMFK16569LA12397	1863		Excellent

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, 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 last 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 to a technician certified team has evolved 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 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. 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. The current administration has noted this concern and the opening of the Westside station addressed a major shortcoming in our response coverage. OSHA safety standards and NFPA recommendations will inevitably increase staffing requirements.

We have seen with increasing frequency the difficulties encountered with our current minimum staffing levels. Our administrative staffing has not expanded to match the needs of our department and the city. 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,

Geoff Herald

Geoffrey Herald
Fire Chief