

FIRE STUDY

SANDY TOWNSHIP & DUBOIS CITY, CLEARFIELD COUNTY

JULY 2021

**Governor's Center for
Local Government Services**
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In April 2020, the Pennsylvania Economy League Central Division (PEL) entered into an agreement with the City of DuBois and Sandy Township to study the financial and operational impacts of consolidating the City and Township into a single municipality.

The study examines potential positive and negative outcomes for the municipalities and their residents, including tax and utility fee implications, service levels, staffing, facilities, collective bargaining, pension plans, and impact on the Federal Community Development Block Grant and State Road Drainage Programs, among other items.

At the same time, the two municipalities entered into an agreement with the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) in the Governor's Center for Local Government Services to study the potential outcomes and efficiencies of a consolidated fire department. The DCED's Peer Consultant, Nicholas Sohyda, was assigned to this project to provide recommendations to the Governor's Center, the governing bodies, and the five separate volunteer fire service organizations.

As noted in the City of DuBois and Sandy Township Consolidation Study, prepared by the Pennsylvania Economy League, "the proposed reorganization process will not have an immediate impact on how the fire service operates. The level of funding for the fire departments would remain the same after reorganization. There might be the need to change the governance structures of the fire service as part of the reorganization, but the process would play out over years with the involvement of the fire service leadership."

The consultant reviewed data provided by the fire departments, attended virtual tours and meetings with the nine (9) separate fire companies, the Sandy Township Firefighters Relief Association, the City of DuBois Firefighters Relief Association, and elected officials and the leadership teams from both communities. The intent of the meetings was to educate the fire departments and community leaders on best practices, discuss options for mergers and consolidations, and to answer questions.

Due to the complexity of consolidating a municipal fire department with four (4) separate volunteer 501c3 non-profit organizations, the likelihood that changes will occur in the individual organizations over that period of time, and the need to involve fire service leadership in the future direction of the consolidated organization, the Peer Consultant has chosen to provide strategic recommendations, instead of providing a traditional study, to address specific areas of operational concern should the consolidation of Sandy Township and the City of DuBois become a reality.

The areas addressed in the strategic recommendations include the development of a Fire Commission, Relief Associations, Volunteer Board, Fire Department Leadership, facilities and apparatus, and finances and budgeting. It is expected that the Peer Consultant would be available

to assist throughout the fire department consolidation process by providing information, facilitating discussions, and mediating disagreements.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION #1: INCLUDE PROVISIONS FOR FIRE PROTECTION IN THE HOME RULE CHARTER

To provide greater tax flexibility, the Pennsylvania Economy League's Consolidation Report recommended the communities consider the adoption of a Home Rule Charter. A Home Rule Charter is a written document defining the powers, structure, rights and duties of a municipal government, including provisions for fire protection. A charter provides the new community with its own "constitution," shifting responsibility from rules and regulations set by the state legislature to those decided in large degree by the local citizens. In addition to tax flexibility, this shift in the context of consolidation gives residents greater ownership of the new municipality since it can be tailored to fit citizens' needs.

The following is an example for the provision of fire protection in a Pennsylvania community's Home Rule Charter. The provisions may define the function, supervision, management, and duties of the fire department:

FIRE PROTECTION

Function. The Fire Department shall be responsible for the protection of persons and property within the City/Municipality against fire and for the enforcement of applicable laws, ordinances, codes, and regulations.

Department Head. The Fire Department shall be headed by a Fire Chief, who shall be responsible to the City Manager for the performance and operational functions of this Department. The Fire Chief shall be appointed by the City Manager with the advice and consent of the City Council and shall serve for a two-year term, which may be renewed upon completion of the two-year term. The Fire Chief shall receive a stipend of \$2,000 annually.

Powers and duties. The Fire Chief shall have charge of supervising and directing all functions and operations of the City Fire Department, and, to that end, the Chief shall have the authority and shall be required to:

- (1) Prevent and extinguish fires by exercising supervisory control over subordinate officers to whom he or she issues orders and delegates assigned firefighting tasks.
- (2) Plan, organize, assign, and direct departmental operations with respect to equipment, apparatus, personnel, and training.
- (3) Enforce the fire prevention ordinances and regulations of the City, such as safety regulations for public assemblies, the handling and storage of combustible materials, the use of flammable liquids and explosives and all other laws relating to fires and fire hazards.

- (4) Prepare and analyze records and reports related to fires and fire hazards to ensure efficient operations, to meet service demands and to comply with requests for information from the City Manager.
- (5) Be responsible for the day-to-day operation and maintenance of the fire station, fire vehicles, equipment, and apparatus.
- (6) Respond to general and major fire alarms and personally direct the firefighting activities on the scene.
- (7) Establish and maintain effective working relationships with other area Fire Departments and emergency medical service providers.
- (8) Initiate and administer a fire prevention program for the City, including public education programs.
- (9) Serve as a liaison between the City Manager and/or the Public Safety Director and the Volunteer Fire Department.
- (10) Coordinate Volunteer Fire Department operations and activities.
- (11) Serve in the capacity of Ordinance Officer, enforcing all ordinances of the City as directed by the City Manager.
- (12) Work with the Fire Administrator to prepare and monitor the Department budget.
- (13) Perform other assignments, research and study as directed by City Manager.

Fire Administrator. A Fire Administrator shall be responsible for the administrative functions of the fire department. The Fire Administrator shall be responsible to the City Manager and shall work with the Fire Chief. The Fire Administrator shall be appointed by the City Manager with the advice and consent of the City Council.

Powers and duties. The Fire Administrator shall have charge of all administrative functions and of the City Fire Department, and, to that end, shall be required to:

- (1) Apply for and manage federal, state, and private grants and funding for the fire department.
- (2) Work with the Fire Chief to prepare and monitor the fire department budget.
- (3) Submit all invoices for payment to the Finance Department.

- (4) Maintain and review for accuracy all administrative records of the fire department, including personnel rosters and incident reports.
- (5) Provide communications and correspondence to all members of the fire department and the community regarding events, training, policy changes, and other activities.
- (6) Bill for services for inspections, vehicle accidents, structure fires, etc. as indicated in the City's fee schedule.
- (7) Prepare monthly and annual reports to the City Manager regarding the activities and performance of the fire department.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION #2: APPOINTMENT OF A FIRE-RESCUE COMMISSION

The creation of a Fire Commission to manage and coordinate the initial consolidation of the fire departments, including assisting the fire department with the development of an annual budget, policy development, and determining staffing needs, apparatus needs, and station locations. The 7 to 9-member commission should consist of participants from both communities. The committee may include elected officials and administrators from the city and township, as well as representatives from various community stakeholders, and one fire department representative from each community. Non-voting members of the Commission should include the Fire Administrator and the Fire Chief.

The intent of a Fire-Rescue Commission is to ensure that each communities' interests are equally represented in the development of the new fire department. The Fire-Rescue Commission will work with the Fire Chief, the Fire Administrator, and the Volunteer Executive Board, City Manager, and Elected Officials. They serve six-year terms. Each commissioner is obligated to attend board meetings regularly. There should be a sunset provision to allow for the disbandment of the Fire-Rescue Commission once the Commission elected officials believe the new fire department is operating effectively and serving the needs of both communities and the consolidated city.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION #3: HIRE A FULL-TIME FIRE ADMINISTRATOR

Recruit and hire a full-time fire administrator to oversee the administrative functions of the combined fire department. Working with the Fire Commission and the Fire Chief, the Fire Administrator would be responsible for supporting the volunteer fire company officers by providing a clear line of communication between the fire department and the Commission, preparing an annual budget, paying bills, providing monthly and annual reports to the

Commission and elected officials, applying for and overseeing grants, quality control of incident reports, and coordinating with the Volunteer Fire Department Executive Board.

JOB SUMMARY.

Under general direction, the Fire Department Administrative Manager manages the administration support services of the City Fire Department. Responsibilities include providing general and confidential administrative support to the Fire Chief; managing the department's records and communications functions; coordinating various administrative and staff functions/workloads; assisting the department's budgeting and purchasing activities; as a member of the department's management team, coordinates activities with other City, County, Regional, and State departments and the general public; supervises assigned staff; performs other duties as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED.

Receives general supervision from the Fire Chief or his/her designee during absences. Exercises direct and indirect supervision over assigned support staff.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES.

Essential and other important responsibilities may include, but are not limited to, the following: Plans, organizes, and directs all activities of the Fire Department, including budgeting, financial reporting, office automation and information systems, contract management, personnel management.

- Oversees and participates in the development of the City budget; participates in the forecasting of necessary funds for staffing, materials, services, and supplies; monitors the approved budgets; discusses and resolves budget issues with appropriate staff.
- Oversees Accounts Payable; approves all coded invoices and purchase orders; review monthly expense reports; maintains spending within approved amounts; responsible for the processing/payment of invoices.
- Takes accurate minutes of meetings; provides administrative/logistical support to board members.
- Prepares and provides complex reports, correspondence, staff reports, ordinances, and resolutions to the City, committees, stations, outside agencies, and the public.
- Prepares and coordinates departmental items for City Council agendas; prepares recommendations for consideration by the Fire Chief.
- Maintains accurate records of special funds, including grants and specific fees.

- May serve on committees; may represent the Fire Department to other departments, agencies, community groups and/or the public; participates in meetings, conferences, workshops, trainings, etc., as assigned; attends City Council meetings as needed.
- Establishes positive working relationships with representatives of community organizations, State/Local agencies and associations, City management, staff, and the public.
- Other duties as assigned.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS.

Knowledge of: Principles and practices of organization, administration, and personnel management; principles and practices of budget preparation and administration; research methods, records management and report writing; principles and practices of budgeting accounting and financial record keeping in a municipal government; information systems equipment and procedures; general responsibilities, rules and regulations pertaining to local government agencies, including municipal fire departments and fire districts.

Ability to: Plan, organize, analyze problems; identify alternative solutions, project consequences of proposed actions and implement recommendations in support of goals; analyze facts and make sound recommendations; prepare completed staff work for oral and written communications; work with control sensitive and confidential information; estimate and project revenues and expenditures; plan, initiate, and complete work assignments with a minimum of direction; communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing; establish and maintain cooperative-working relationships in a team environment and with those contracted in the course work; utilize word processing, spreadsheet and presentation computer software in an effective and efficient manner.

EXPERIENCE AND CERTIFICATION(S).

Any experience and training that would provide the required knowledge and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and abilities would be:

- Experience. Five years of increasingly responsible technical, administrative, or analytical experience in a public agency/special district or any combination of experience and training that would likely provide the required knowledge and abilities.
- High school diploma or GED equivalent. Maintain possession of a valid Pennsylvania Driver's License and have a satisfactory driving record as a condition of employment.
- ICS/NIMS Certification

- NECESSARY SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS. Must be 18 years of age or older. Must successfully pass a pre-employment medical examination, including a drug screen, fingerprint, background check, and reference check. Must be able to provide proof of U.S. citizenship or legal right to work in the United States.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION #4: CONSOLIDATION OF VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY RELIEF ASSOCIATIONS

Annually, the Department of the Auditor General assists volunteer emergency service personnel through the distribution of the foreign fire insurance tax premium. These funds are determined by a statutory formula and are allocated through the local municipalities to nearly 1,900 Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Associations in Pennsylvania. The statutory authority over Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Associations is contained in Act 188 of 2010.

Volunteer firefighters' relief associations are separate legal organizations affiliated with volunteer fire companies and/or volunteer fire departments (herein referred to as fire company). The volunteer firefighters' relief association (VFRA) is a separate legal entity from the fire company. VFRAs are funded by a statutory disbursement of foreign fire insurance tax funds. Disbursements are made to the VFRA's local municipality who then will forward the funds to the VFRA.

The purpose of the VFRA is to encourage individuals to take part in the fire service as a volunteer and to provide funds for the protection of the volunteer firefighter and their heirs. Act 118 is very clear in setting specific requirements for what constitutes a Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association and when such an organization can receive aid funds under that Act. The act requires that the relief association be formed primarily to afford financial protection to volunteer firefighters against consequences of misfortune suffered as a result of their participation in the fire service.

Currently, there are two (2) Relief Associations, the Sandy Township Volunteer Firefighters Relief Association & the City of Dubois Firefighters Relief Association. It is recommended to merge the Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Associations. The dissolution process for a volunteer firefighters' relief association is dictated by Section 7419 of Act 118.

If the volunteer fire company affiliated with the volunteer firefighters' relief association elects to merge with another volunteer fire company as a result of financial or manpower constraints, the volunteer firefighters' relief association may also dissolve and merge. In that case, the remaining volunteer firefighters' relief association members should conduct a meeting to approve the dissolution of one of the associations and the disposition of its assets to the other. In most circumstances, all relief association-owned equipment and monetary assets of the dissolving

relief association are to be transferred to the new relief association affiliated with the volunteer fire company that is reestablished as a result of the merger.

The Department of the Auditor General should be notified by an officer of the dissolving relief association so the department can perform a final audit of the dissolving relief association to verify the proper disposition of the relief association's monetary assets and equipment. The department will then verify the receipt of the equipment and monetary assets transferred through an audit of the recipient association.

A second option, while not recommended, would be to form a new relief association under the new fire department with all active members transferring to the new relief association and non-active members of the respective communities remaining in the existing relief associations. No additional funding would be allocated to the existing relief associations. As stated in Act 118 of 2010, Section 7419 (d), when the membership of a relief association diminishes to five members, the association shall apply to the local common pleas court for dissolution.

Pursuant to Act 118 of 2010, Section 7419(b), the volunteer firefighters' relief association shall continue granting financial assistance to its remaining members and their families in death, sickness and distress suffered through the unfortunate elements of life.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION #5: CONSOLIDATION OF VOLUNTEER FIRECOMPANY BY-LAWS & EXECUTIVE BOARDS

When forming the new 501c3 organization, it will be necessary to develop a new set of bylaws, agreed upon by the two consolidating communities/fire departments. It is recommended that the departments form a bylaw committee, with representation from each community/fire department to draft a new set of bylaws for the new organization. The bylaws should be written to allow for equal representation from each of the communities making up the new fire department. At a minimum, the bylaws should include:

- Purpose and legal powers
- Membership (Member classes, affiliate members, participation requirements)
- Organizational Committees (Purpose, Titles, Duties)
- Officers of the Organization (Titles, Duties, Number, Qualifications, Term Limits)
- Procedures for Voting
- Schedule for regular and annual meetings
- Quorum requirements
- Business Dealings, Contracts, Checks
- Books & Recordkeeping

- Transparency & Accountability
- Code of Ethics
- Amendments of Articles of Incorporation
- Dissolution
- Certificate of Adoption

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION #6: DETERMINATION OF FIRE STATIONS & LOCATIONS

The consolidation, elimination, relocation, and/or building of new fire stations would occur over a period of time. Due to the extreme overlap in the current distribution of the nine (9) existing fire stations (Figure 1), all locations, with the exception of Treasure Lake, remain as a future possibility for closures and/or expansion.

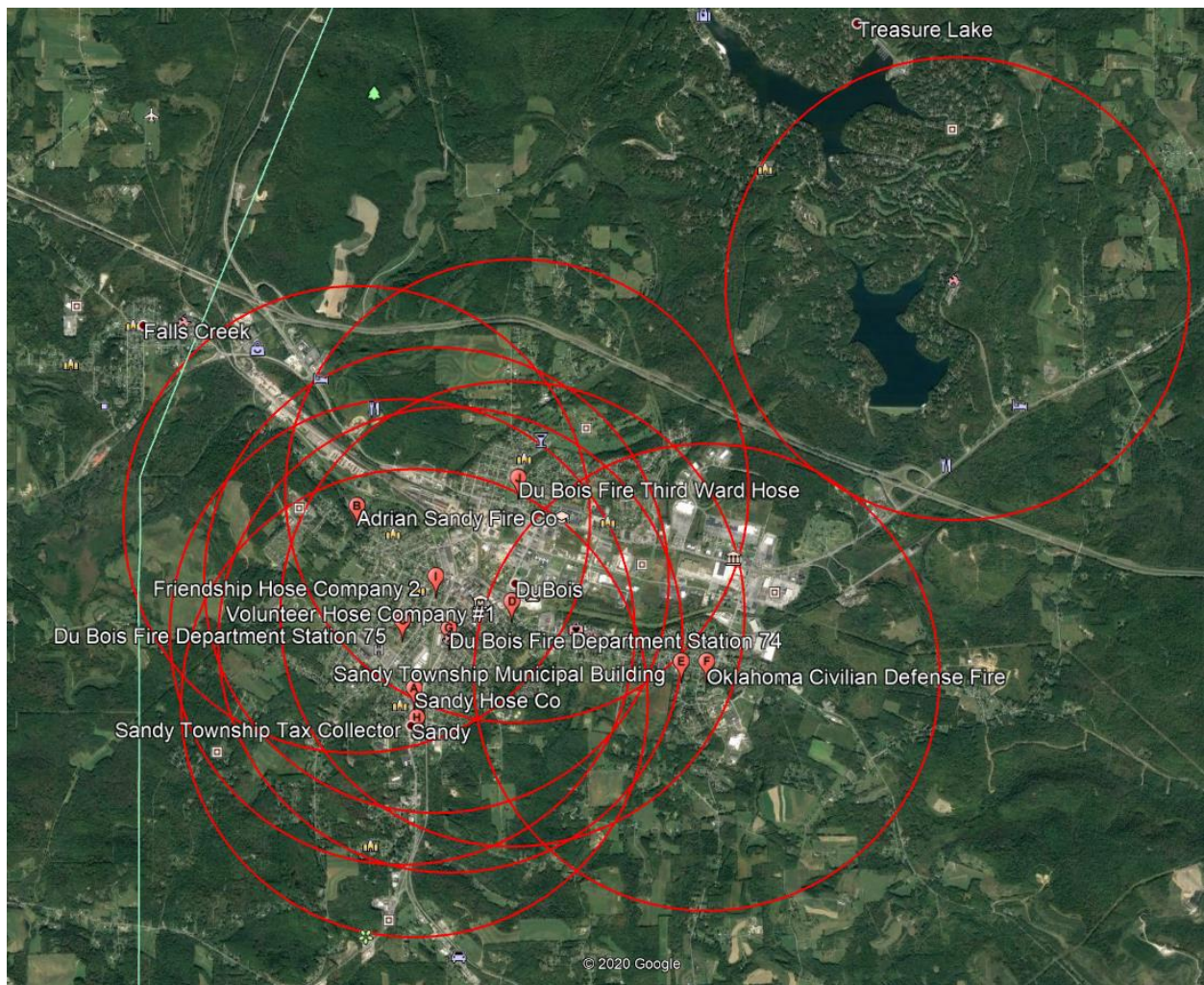


Figure 1: Current Fire Station Distribution

At a minimum, all fire stations should be strategically located so that every part of the suburban/urban jurisdiction is within 5 miles of a fire station. Part of the decision-making process for determining which station(s) to close, merge, and/or expand should include:

- Proximity to other fire stations
- Location of calls
- Type of apparatus needed to service the area
- Number of apparatus needed to service the area
- Community access
- Location of volunteers' residences in proximity to the station location
- Number of active volunteers
- Volunteer turnout
- Age and condition of existing building
- Station amenities (day room, bunk rooms, showers)
- Age and condition of apparatus
- Room for expansion
- Funding available for renovations
- Property owned by the municipality
- Funding for new fire stations
- NFPA Standards
- Safety & health considerations

Utilizing existing facilities/locations, approximately five (5) fire stations would be needed, deploying 5 engines, 1 aerial, 1 quint, 2 rescues, 2 tankers, 2 brush trucks, and several utility vehicles. In the longer term, a minimum of three (3) new, strategically placed, fire stations could also serve the community, deploying 4 engines, 1 aerial, 1 rescue, 2 tankers, 2 brush trucks, and several utility vehicles.

Decisions regarding fire station closures, consolidations, renovations, and/or new construction should involve leaders from both communities/fire departments and the new government based on the above factors and financial resources, which are subject to change during the time it may take to complete the municipal and fire department consolidation process.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION #7: DETERMINATION OF NUMBER AND TYPE OF FIRE APPARATUS

It is a generally accepted fact that fire apparatus, like all types of mechanical devices, have a finite life. The length of that life depends on many factors, including vehicle mileage and engine hours, quality of the preventative maintenance program, quality of the driver training program, whether the fire apparatus was used within the design parameters, whether the apparatus was

manufactured on a custom or commercial chassis, quality of workmanship by the original manufacturer, quality of the components used, and availability of replacement parts, to name a few.

In the fire service, there are fire apparatus with 8 to 10 years of service that are simply worn out. There is also fire apparatus that were manufactured with quality components, that have had excellent maintenance, and that have responded to a minimum number of incidents that are still in serviceable condition after 20 years. Most would agree that the care of fire apparatus while being used and the quality and timeliness of maintenance are perhaps the most significant factors in determining how well a fire apparatus age.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard on Automotive Fire Apparatus, Guidelines for First-Line and Reserve Fire Apparatus, recommends that apparatus greater than 15 years be placed in reserve status and upgraded to incorporate as many features as possible of the current fire apparatus standard. The recommended age for reserve apparatus is between twenty and twenty-three years, with applicable upgrades.

Definition of first-line fire apparatus: First-line fire apparatus must be manufactured to NFPA 1901 and must be maintained in accordance with NFPA 1912 and 1915.

Definition of reserve fire apparatus: Reserve fire apparatus is defined as apparatus manufactured to applicable NFPA 1901 editions, after 1991 and prior to the 2009 edition. Such apparatus must have been **upgraded to include as many of the features as possible** found in 2009 or newer units.

While NFPA Standards are not mandatory, they establish a datum point for age of apparatus and updating guidelines. Fire Departments that do not follow NFPA Guidelines assume full liability of retaining known deficient apparatus in service. To knowingly operate or approve of the operation of a vehicle that could kill or injure the public or a fire fighter severely exposes fire department officials to liability.

Critical enhancements in design, safety, and technology should also play a key role in the evaluation of an apparatus' life cycle. Previous editions of the fire department apparatus standards featured many requirements advancing the level of automotive fire apparatus safety and user friendliness. Contained within the 2016 edition were requirements for rollover stability; tire pressure indicators; seat belt warning systems requiring all occupants be properly seated and belted; extended seat belt length requirements resulting from an in-depth anthropometric study evaluating the average size of today's fully dressed firefighter; roadability, including minimum accelerations and top speed limitations; enhanced step and work surface lighting; cab integrity testing; increased use of retroreflective striping in the rear of apparatus, providing a consistent

identifiable set of markings for all automotive fire apparatus; and enhanced aerial control technologies, enabling short jacking and envelope controls.

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) has always evaluated the distribution of fire resources through the community based on a fixed travel distance of 1.5 miles for an engine company and 2.5 miles for a ladder/service company. Over 40 years ago, the RAND institute conducted research on the travel times of various types of fire apparatus. One of the results of the research was the determination that the average speed of a fire engine on an emergency response was 35 miles-per-hour (MPH) over average terrain, with average traffic and weather conditions, and slowing restrictions. Another result was the equation commonly referred to as the RAND travel time equation. The equation that is used by ISO and many others is $T = 0.65 + 1.7D$

Using the equation $T = 0.65 + 1.7D$, where D equals 1.5 miles, ISO determined that the travel time for the first arriving engine is 192 seconds. Using the RAND equation, 240 seconds is equal to about 1.97 miles. Thus, in urban and suburban areas, fire station could be located between 3 and 4 miles apart to achieve a desired 4 minute travel time.

According to the Insurance Services Office (ISO), fire stations should be located in a city so that each first alarm engine company has a response district that ends 1.5 road miles from the fire station and a first alarm ladder company has a response district that ends 2.5 road miles from the fire station.

Based on the NFPA's 2018 US Fire Department Profiles, the average number of pumpers per 1,000 population in the United States was .08 and the average number of aerial apparatus was 0.02. With a combined population of approximately 18,000, this equates to 1.36 pumpers and 0.36 aerial apparatus; however, this number of resources would not be realistic to meet desired travel times.

The current fleet of fire apparatus in the Dubois and Sandy Township Fire Departments consists of the following (Table 1):

Table 1: Current Fire Apparatus Fleet for Sandy Township & Dubois

West Sandy	Engine	Truck	Tanker	Brush	Squad	Rescue
	1	1	1	1		
Oklahoma	Engine	Truck	Tanker	Brush	Squad	Rescue
	1		1		1	
Adrian Sandy	Engine	Truck	Tanker	Brush	Squad	Rescue
	1			1		1
North Point	Engine	Truck	Tanker	Brush	Squad	Rescue
	2			1		
Hose Co. No. 1	Engine	Truck	Tanker	Brush	Squad	Rescue
	1	1				
Hose Co. No. 2	Engine	Truck	Tanker	Brush	Squad	Rescue
	1				1	
Hose Co. No. 3	Engine	Truck	Tanker	Brush	Squad	Rescue
	2					
Hose Co. No. 4	Engine	Truck	Tanker	Brush	Squad	Rescue
	1					1
Hose Co. No. 5	Engine	Truck	Tanker	Brush	Squad	Rescue
	1				1	
TOTAL	Engine	Truck	Tanker	Brush	Squad	Rescue
	11	2	2	3	3	2

Of the existing major apparatus, approximately 25% has exceeded the 25-year replacement cycle, 25% should be replaced in the next 5 years, and an additional 25% should be replaced in the next 10 years (Table 2):

Table 2: Age of Major Apparatus by Type for Sandy Township & DuBois

< 5 years	5-10 years	10-15 years	15-20 years	20-25 years	25+ years
Engines	1	1	1	4	4
Trucks		1	1		
Brush			2	1	
Tanker			1	1	
Rescue		1	1		1

The cost to maintain and replace the current fleet with a 25-year replacement plan would be \$466,000 annually, at today's estimated costs, not including inflation (Table 3). One of the advantages to closing stations is the cost savings related to not having to replace apparatus.

- 5 stations – 5 engines, 1 truck, 1 quint, 1 heavy rescue, 1 light rescue, 2 tankers, 2 brush = \$280,000 per year
- 4 stations – 5 engines, 1 truck, 1 rescue, 2 tankers, 2 brush = \$236,000 per year
- 3 stations – 4 engines, 1 truck, 1 rescue, 2 tankers, 2 brush = \$210,000 per year

Table 3: Cost of Apparatus Replacement – Current Sandy Township & DuBois Fleet

Unit	Purchased	Make	Replacement	Years Over/Under Replacement	Estimated Cost
Engine 73-2	1983	Mack	2008	-13	\$600,000
Engine 37	1988	Pierce	2013	-8	\$600,000
Engine 74	1990	Sutphen	2015	-6	\$600,000
Rescue 74	1990	E-One	2015	-6	\$450,000
Engine 75	1996	Sutphen	2021	0	\$600,000
Engine 38	1997	Freightliner	2022	+1	\$450,000
Engine 39	1998	Pierce	2023	+2	\$600,000
Engine 72	1999	Seagrave	2024	+3	\$600,000
Engine 73	2000	Spartan	2025	+4	\$600,000
Attack 39	2001	Ford	2026	+5	\$300,000
Tanker 37	2001	Freightliner	2026	+5	\$450,000
Engine 36	2002	ALF	2027	+6	\$600,000
Tanker 36	2003	Freightliner	2028	+7	\$450,000
Squad 37	2003	Pierce	2028	+7	\$500,000
Brush 38	2003	Ford	2028	+7	\$150,000
Brush 36	2003	Ford	2028	+7	\$150,000
Truck 72	2004	Spartan	2029	+8	\$1,200,000
Engine 71	2008	Spartan	2033	+12	\$600,000
Tanker 39	2008	International	2033	+12	\$450,000
Rescue 38	2008	Spartan	2033	+12	\$500,000
Truck 36	2012	Smeal	2037	+17	\$1,200,000
TOTAL					\$11,650,000

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION #8: ESTABLISHING A FIRE DEPARTMENT BUDGET

One of the advantages of adopting a Home Rule Charter is tax flexibility. A 3-mill special fire tax would generate approximately \$360,000.00. Currently, the Dubois Fire Department is funded through the City's General Fund and the Sandy Township Fire Department is funded through a 3-mill fire tax.

The following preliminary budget has been developed to provide both communities with possible costs for a combined fire department, based on a 3, 4, and 5 fire station model.

	<u>Current</u>	<u>5-Station</u>	<u>4-Station</u>	<u>3-Station</u>
Revenue				
Revenue - Relief	104,000	104,000	104,000	104,000
Direct Revenue - Municipal	360,300	360,300	360,300	360,300
Revenue - Fundraising	?	?	?	?
Revenue - State Grant	117,000	117,000	117,000	117,000
Revenue - Misc.	?	?	?	?
Revenue - TOTAL	580,000	580,000	580,000	580,000
Expense				
Fire Administrator - Salary & Benefits		90,000	90,000	90,000
Fire Chief - Stipend		3,600	3,600	3,600
Workers Comp Insurance	62,180	45,850	45,850	45,850
Relief Insurance Premiums	97,000	97,000	97,000	97,000
Recruitment & Retention	600	25,000	25,000	25,000
Salaries/Reimbursement	4,800	4,800	4,800	4,800
Profession Services - Computer		3,700	3,700	3,700
Professional Services - General	5,050	5,050	5,050	5,050
Training - Registration	3,060	5,000	5,000	5,000
Training - Travel	4,360	6,000	6,000	6,000
Training - Supplies	1,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Utilities - Phone	8,200	4,500	3,600	2,700
Utilities - Gas	52,760	29,000	23,500	17,580
Utilities - Electric	44,720	25,000	20,000	14,900
Fuel	13,000	8,500	7,150	2,500
Repairs - General	2,500	30,000	25,000	20,000
Maint. & Repairs - Apparatus	17,500	39,200	28,000	25,000
Repairs - Building	29,000	30,000	24,000	18,000
Contractual Maint.	25,140	21,100	16,880	12,660
Fire Prevention	1,300	2,500	2,000	1,500

Office Supplies - Computer		2,500	2000	1,500
Office Supplies - General	300	1,000	700	500
Minor Equipment - Radio		6,000	5,000	4,000
Minor Equipment - Computer		3,000	2,000	1,000
Minor Equipment - General	4,500	35,000	30,000	22,000
Maint. Supplies - Chemicals		2,500	2,000	1,500
Maint. Supplies - Support		2,800	2,400	2,000
Maint. Supplies - Electrical		2,800	2,400	2,000
Maint. Supplies - General	500	5,600	4,800	4,000
SUBTOTAL	377,470	539,000	489,430	441,340
Annual Capital - Buildings	180,000	160,000	240,000	240,000
Annual Capital - Apparatus	466,000	280,000	236,000	210,000
Annual Capital - SCBA	38,000	24,000	22,000	17,000
Annual Capital – Protective Gear	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
SUBTOTAL	714,000	494,000	528,000	497,000
TOTAL	1,091,470	1,033,001	1,017,430	938,340

NOTES:

- 1) The state grant revenue is approximately \$13,000 per station per year. As stations close/combine, the department continues to receive the funding for the closed/combined fire department for 10-years.
- 2) The Capital-Buildings Expense assumes investing \$1,000,000 in each station over the next 50-years and/or building new stations at \$4,000,000 over the next 50-years.
- 3) The number of SCBA in the Capital – SCBA Category is based on the number of riding positions of the projected number of apparatus needed under each model.
- 4) The number of sets of gear in the Capital – Protective Gear assumes 100 active members receive new gear every 10-years.

Appendix A

Public Presentation

DuBois / Sandy Fire Consolidation

Opportunities

- Common mission and vision
- Common standards and training
- One chain of command
- Increased accountability
- Reduced response time by dispatching the closest unit
- Eliminates duplication of resources (station and apparatus)
- Reduced apparatus and building maintenance and upkeep
- Improved firefighter safety
- Hiring of a Fire Administrator
- Volunteer Incentives

Concerns

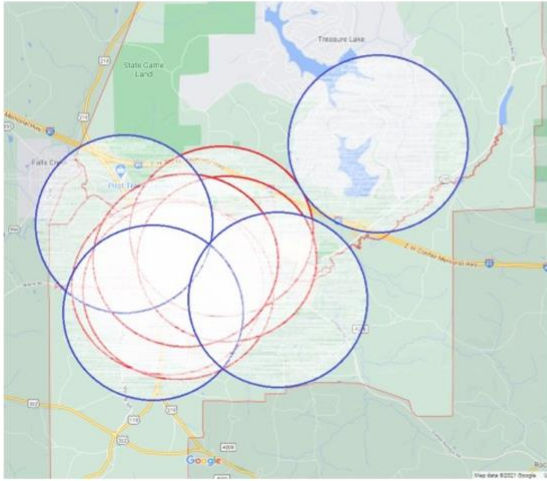
- Relief Associations
- Municipal vs 501c3 organizations
- Station locations / closures
- Organizational structure
- Apparatus needs
- Loss of volunteers
- Funding

Timing Years 1 - 3

If referendum passes:

- Fire protection as part of the new Home Rule Charter
- Formation of committee to standardize volunteer company laws
- Formation of committee to standardize relief laws
- Formation of committee to standardize operating procedures and command structure
- Funding and budget development
- Formation of a fire commission
- Dissolution of the 4 independent 501c3 organizations
- Charter the new organization- originally with 9 stations

Timing: Years 4 - 6



- Formation of a committee to look at fire station locations, closures, mergers, and apparatus needs
- Currently 9 stations
- Currently 11 engines, 2 aerials, 3 rescue trucks, 2 tankers, and 3 brush trucks
- 5 vehicles over 25 years old, 6 vehicles between 20-25 years old, 6 vehicles between 15-20 years old.
- Current replacement cost \$11,650,000 (\$466,000 annually)

Considerations for Station Closures / Mergers

- Proximity to other fire stations
- Location of calls
- Type of apparatus needed to service the area
- Number of apparatus needed to service the area
- Community access
- Location of volunteers' residences in proximity to the station location
- Number of active volunteers
- Volunteer turnout
- Age and condition of existing building
- Station amenities (day room, bunk rooms, showers)
- Age and condition of apparatus
- Room for expansion

Potential Organizational Structure

