



City of Florence
A City in Motion

PRESS RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Megan Messmer
Assistant City Manager/PIO
megan.messmer@ci.florence.or.us
(541) 997-3437

Police Chief Tom Turner Retires; City Appoints Commander John Pitcher Interim Police Chief

FLORENCE, OR – City of Florence Chief of Police Thomas Turner is retiring this month after seven years of service with the City of Florence. Chief Turner reached the decision to retire as the result of an existing medical condition. He plans to focus on his health and spend time with his family.

Effective Friday, May 6, 2022, City Manager Erin Reynolds has appointed Commander John Pitcher as Interim Chief of Police for the City of Florence.

“Chief Turner is a friend and has been a mentor to me for many years. I can’t thank him enough for preparing me for this role,” stated Interim Chief of Police John Pitcher.

With Chief Turner’s retirement, the City will take time to evaluate the needs of the Police Department before making a decisions about the future of the Department’s leadership. The City would like to extend a special thanks to Commander Pitcher for his leadership during this time. More information will be forthcoming in the next 30 days.

A Thank You to Chief Turner

Prior to becoming the City’s Chief of Police in May of 2015, Chief Turner retired as Lane County Sheriff in 2015. Chief Turner, a career law enforcement officer, began as a Reserve Officer for the City of Eugene in 1981 and became a Resident Deputy for Lane County Sheriff’s Office in 1982. He then went to serve the City of Eugene’s Police Department for 23 years, working as a Police Officer, Police Agent (Detective), Sergeant, and Lieutenant, before returning to Lane County Sheriff’s Office as Administrative Captain. He was then promoted to Undersheriff in 2007, before being appointed Sheriff in 2011 and being elected by Lane County voters in 2012.

City Manager Erin Reynolds said “Chief Turner will be missed and he leaves behind a tremendous legacy. It was truly a privilege not only work with Tom, but to learn from him and to be able to count him as a friend. It was an honor to have him serve as the Chief of Police for our community.”

Under Chief Turner’s leadership, the City of Florence Police Department has worked to implement updated best practices and increase community engagement. Chief Turner has led the Department into its next phase. As the Department has seen several retirements of longtime Officers during his tenure, Chief Turner has worked to hire new Officers, encouraged the professional and leadership development of existing Officers, and instill the value of community policing throughout the Department.

Reynolds went on to say, "I am so very proud of the example and culture in the Florence Police Department that Chief Turner helped to establish. He was a great leader and had so much valuable knowledge and experience. The community really benefited from having him here these past seven years. I know that our Officers, Dispatchers, Sergeants, and Police Commander are well situated to support each other, the City, and the community while we take time to consider the next steps forward for the Department at this time."

In her announcement to City staff, City Manager Erin Reynolds stated that "Chief Turner has been an integral part of the City for the last seven years. His contributions and experience will always be valued and remembered. His hard work, dedication, and commitment (not only to the Department, but to the City and the community as well) are worthy of admiration."

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Enclosed: Chief Turner Portrait
Interim Chief Pitcher Portrait