

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gurnee Police Chief Kevin Woodside Announces Retirement

GURNEE, IL – Chief Kevin Woodside, Police Chief for the Village of Gurnee, has announced his upcoming retirement effective January 1, 2019 after 30 years of service to the Gurnee Police Department. He has served as Police Chief since July 2011.

"My thirty year career with the Gurnee Police Department has been a personally and professionally rewarding experience. I cannot begin to express the mix of emotions that comes with bringing this chapter of my life to a close. Being allowed to serve as Police Chief for the past seven years has been an absolute privilege. Many times I have told people that it is the best job in the world because I get to lead the best team in the world, and I believe that wholeheartedly," stated Chief Woodside.

"One of our most significant achievements has been building a collaborative team approach to leadership and developing strong leaders within the department. After thirty years, it is time for the next generation to lead. We have a very strong leadership team and you can be assured that the Gurnee Police Department is in very capable hands."

Chief Woodside was hired as a police officer in 1988 and progressed through the ranks, culminating in his appointment as Chief of Police in November 2011.

Gurnee Mayor Kristina Kovarik commented on Chief Woodside's service to Gurnee: "All of the residents, businesses, and visitors of the Village of Gurnee have benefited immensely from Chief Woodside's dedication to improving public safety and community relations. He was worked tirelessly to implement the Department's mission of Honor, Integrity and Service into every facet of Police operations. Under his leadership the Gurnee Police Department has strengthened relationships, increased safety, enhanced accessibility, improved transparency and employed technology. We appreciate the 30 years of service he has provided to the Village and wish him the very best in his retirement."

Under Chief Woodside's leadership over the past several years, the Gurnee Police Department has made notable achievements that include:

- **Establishment of the Visitor Oriented Policing Team**, expanding on the principles of community policing to provide a team of police officers led by a sergeant and giving full-time attention to the Village's critical retail and entertainment areas.
- **Introduction of Lateral Hiring of Police Officers** to innovate in the area of recruitment and retention to attract the best and brightest law enforcement professionals available.
- **Creation of a Police Explorer Post** which has allowed the Gurnee Police to form a positive relationship with local youth, developing their character and competence to become future law enforcement leaders.
- **Creation of annual Youth Police Academy** to extend the benefits of our Citizen Police Academy to the youth in our community to educate and create a positive first impression of the local police.
- **Development of the Body-Worn Camera Program** and becoming a leader in adopting this technology.
- **Introduction of TASER Conducted Electrical Weapons** to provide officers with an important less lethal force option.
- **Establishment of a consolidated Dispatch Center with the City of Zion** within the Gurnee Police Facility to provide 911 services and police and fire dispatching for Gurnee and Zion Police and Fire as well as Newport and Beach Park Fire Departments.

Mayor Kovarik has announced that she will name Deputy Chief Brian Smith to serve as Interim Police Chief after Chief Woodside steps down next January. Deputy Chief Smith has served with the Gurnee Police Department since 2000, and he has been a member of the command staff since 2014.

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