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Chief of Police Joseph Manning Resigns

Joseph Manning resigned his position as Police Chief of the Town of Bluffton's Police Department. Manning's last day of employment with the Town will be on or before May 9. He was recently selected as Chief of Police in Sevierville, Tennessee.

"I am very sad to leave Bluffton after how wonderful and supportive the community, Mayor Lisa Sulka and council members have been with me from the day I was hired as the Deputy Chief through my tenure as Chief. However, Sevierville is a city my family and I have loved and visited for decades. There was much thought and prayer that went into applying and ultimately accepting this position," said Manning.

Chief Manning began his career with the Bluffton Police Department in September 2013 as the Deputy Chief. He was integral to initiating several specialized units in the department such as the Strategic Response Team (SRT), the Collision Reconstruction Unit (CRU), Special Investigations Unit (SIU), and the K9 Team. Under Chief Manning's leadership, the SRT executed 36 successful operations without incident to any officers, suspects or community members. The CRU has enabled Bluffton officers to thoroughly investigate and discover causes to motor vehicles crashes.

Since being appointed as Chief in July 2017, Manning led the Town's emergency response through Tropical Storm Irma and the 2018 snow storm. He also guided the department through the CALEA (Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc.) Law Enforcement Accreditation process for the fourth time. CALEA Accreditation begins with a rigorous self-assessment, requiring a review of policies, practices and processes against internationally accepted public-safety standard. The department is considered for reaccreditation every four years.

Manning's leadership and programs have also contributed to Safe Home, an online organization dedicated to community safety, naming Bluffton as one of South Carolina's safest cities two years in a row. In 2017, Bluffton was ranked the fifth safest city. In 2016, Bluffton was ranked as the 10th safest city.

“The Chief’s law enforcement experience and forward-thinking attitude allowed the department to progress to the standards it has today, and I’m grateful for that,” Mayor Lisa Sulka said. “He will be missed and I wish him success in Tennessee.”

“I appreciate all Chief Manning has accomplished for the police department, and most importantly, providing a safe environment for those who live and work in Bluffton. His operational skills allowed the Town to be in good hands during incidents, including hurricanes, special events and major investigations,” said Bluffton Town Manager Marc Orlando. “We wish him well in his new position.”

Prior to Manning’s departure, Orlando will appoint an interim chief of police. In the next several days, the Town will finalize the mechanics of the process for selecting a new chief. The search will be open to both internal and external applicants, and will be advertised through state and national outlets.

The Bluffton Police Department has policing jurisdiction throughout Bluffton’s 54-square miles and employs 51 sworn officers and 12 civilian employees.