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Police chief gives 30-day notice



Police Chief Robert Douglas tells the Chiefland City Commission about his choice to accept the post as chief deputy in Marion County under the leadership of Sheriff Billy Woods.

Story and Photos

By Jeff M. Hardison © Nov. 14, 2016 at 9:57 p.m.

CHIEFLAND -- Chiefland Police Chief Robert Douglas on Monday night (Nov. 14) gave the city his 30-day notice of intent to part ways.

The 11-year veteran police chief for the city said he accepted the position of chief deputy with recently-elected Marion County Sheriff William "Billy" Woods.

Republican Woods earned the most votes in the race for Marion County Sheriff as he was the choice of voters – rather than Democrat Dennis McFatten.

Chief Douglas recommended to the City Commission that it select the next chief from within the ranks of the existing Chiefland Police Department.

Capt. Ray Tremblay is the heir apparent. Capt. Tremblay has been with the CPD for 22 years and he is the highest ranking police officer below the chief, and he has led the department when the chief was not in action.

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Police Chief Robert Douglas pauses to provide a photo opportunity requested by *HardisonInk.com* after the City Commission meeting Monday night (Nov. 14).

As Chief Douglas made his parting statements, it must have been clear to everyone present that he feels tied to Chiefland. For 11 years, though, City Commissioner Rollin Hudson has consistently asked Chief Douglas when he was going to move to Chiefland, and the chief always responded that he like his home in Marion County.

As for Monday night, Chief Douglas cut to the quick as he publicly made his announcement – having told the individual City Commission members about his intention to not renew his contract with the city before the meeting.

According to his contract, Douglas must give a 30-day notification if his intent to leave the city’s workforce. His last day of employment with Chiefland will be Dec. 13.

“I’d like to thank each and every one of y’all,” Douglas said.

The chief said he appreciates the level of confidence this group and some of their predecessors showed. Mayor Betty Walker, and city commissioners Rollin Hudson and Teresa Barron were on the commission the most during Douglas’ career with the city.

The other two Chiefland City Commission members now are Vice Mayor Chris Jones and City Commissioner Donald Lawrence.

The chief said he considered it a privilege to serve the resident and visitors of Chiefland as their police chief.

“For 11 years,” Chief Douglas said, “I’ve been here to protect you with these guys (the officers of the CPD). And you have become my family.

“It was one of the hardest decisions,” he continued “I’ve ever made (to become the chief deputy of the Marion County Sheriff’s Office). And I love and every one of you in the city. I love my people – all my people. And I just want God to bless you all.”

After some discussion, the City Commission agreed to ask members of the CPD who are interested to submit a letter of interest and a résumé.

The City Commission will accept those and discuss them at the Nov. 28 meeting, at which time they may appoint an interim police chief or they may decide the next CPD chief.