



News Release

For Immediate Release
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Contact: Kristy Bansemer
788-1519/393-8549

Derby Names New Fire Chief

Derby, Kansas – On July 1, 2019, John Turner will begin as Fire Chief for the City of Derby (pop. 24,000). He will assume command of a department of 26 full-time, 14 part-time, and 5 volunteer firefighters operating out of two stations and serving the Derby community since 1952. In 2005, the department transitioned from a volunteer department to full-time staffing with continuation of a small volunteer component.

Turner has served the Wichita Fire Department since 1987 in various leadership roles, most recently as Battalion Chief and Division Commander. Turner also teaches leadership and various classes for the U.S. Fire Administration at the National Fire Academy. He graduated from the IAFC Fire Service Executive Development Institute and earned a Master's in Organizational Leadership from Newman University. Turner has been recognized by his peers as State Firefighter of the Year (1995) and Wichita Firefighter of the Year (1996 and 2002).

Turner and his wife Bridget live in Wichita and are in process of relocating to Derby.

"Chief John Turner is a welcome addition to the Derby community," said Kathy Sexton, City Manager. "His reputation in the metro area for excellence in fire operations and leadership is unmatched. I am confident he will take the Derby Fire & Rescue Department to the next level."

The public is invited to meet Chief Turner at a Community Open House on Thursday, July 4 from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the new Fire Station 81 at 715 E. Madison Avenue. Tours of the new fire station will be provided. Turner succeeds Chief Brad Smith who is retiring July 5 after serving since 2004 as Derby's first full-time chief. Smith led the transition from a volunteer department to a full-time one. The public is invited to a retirement reception for Chief Smith on Friday, July 5 from 10 a.m. to noon at the new Fire Station 81 at 715 E. Madison Avenue.

Parking will be extremely limited for both of these events due to several construction projects in the vicinity. Please park at Madison Avenue Central Park (512 E. Madison Ave.) and either walk (2 blocks) or ride the shuttle bus to and from the fire station.

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