



City of Placentia Press Release

For Immediate Release
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Placentia Appoints New Police Chief

PLACENTIA, CA – City Administrator Troy L. Butzlaff has announced the appointment of Ward L. Smith to serve as the new Chief of the Placentia Police Department. Chief Smith succeeds Chief Rick Hicks who retired in June. Chief Smith is a 33-year law enforcement veteran who has worked in every divisional area in the Placentia Police Department.

Chief Smith began his career in law enforcement in 1981 and worked as a Patrol Officer, Field Training Officer, and the Department's first Canine Officer. He has been a Patrol Sergeant and a Detective Sergeant overseeing the Department's Special Enforcement Detail (Gangs & Narcotics), and served as an Ad-Hoc Supervisor for the California Department of Justice overseeing a Multi-Agency Clandestine Lab Clean-up Team. As a Lieutenant, he worked as a Patrol Watch Commander and later as a Detective Bureau Commander.

In 2004, Mr. Smith was promoted to Captain in charge of the Administrative and Support Divisions of the Department. When the Captain from the Operations Division retired, Mr. Smith worked as the Department's sole Captain overseeing all departmental operations reporting directly to the Office of the Chief of Police. Under the direction of Chief Rick Hicks, Ward was promoted to Deputy Chief of Police where he continued as the Department's second in command.

With the retirement of Chief Hicks at the end of June 2014, City Administrator Troy Butzlaff appointed Mr. Smith to the position of Acting Chief of Police. During this time, Mr. Smith has been instrumental in continuing to lead the Department during difficult and challenging times. "Chief Smith is a seasoned law enforcement veteran with a tremendous record of accomplishment throughout his career. With his strong work ethic, leadership style, and passion for Placentia, I am confident that he will be a superb Chief of Police and work tirelessly to provide quality public safety to our community," said Mr. Butzlaff.

Chief Smith holds a Bachelors of Science degree in Public Administration from the University of La Verne.

Chief Smith will be formally introduced as the new Chief of the Placentia Police Department by Mayor Wanke and City Administrator Butzlaff at the January 20, 2015 City Council meeting.

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