

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 15, 2009



Contact:
Debbie George
757-514-4106
757-374-1770

Suffolk Seeks Community Input in Police Chief Search

SUFFOLK, VA (January 15, 2009) The search for the City of Suffolk's next Police Chief is well underway and City Manager Selena Cuffee-Glenn is seeking input from the city's stakeholders as to what they want to see in Suffolk's next top cop. The search for the new Police Chief came after Chief William Freeman announced in November his plans to retire at the end of 2008.

Suffolk's Human Resource Department began an executive search to fill the position on November 12, 2008. Special advertisements have been placed in national and international trade magazines and on employment websites.

In order to obtain input from the community, a team of researchers from Old Dominion University (ODU) have been engaged to facilitate a series of focus groups aimed to gauge the feedback from a number of stakeholders. Six focus groups which include key citizen and business representatives, youth, youth advocates, police department personnel and Constitutional Officers are being held.

In addition, all interested community members can participate in the process via a web-based survey. The questions in the survey are similar to those being posed in the focus groups. Thus, interested citizens of Suffolk who want to may contribute to this important data gathering exercise and have their voices heard even if they don't attend a focus group. Data will be collected via that survey through January 31, 2009. The web address for the survey is <http://www.odu.edu/~doleary/>

After conducting the focus groups and collecting the web-based responses, the ODU research team will submit a report to the City Manager that will summarize this data and provide perspective from those who live and work in Suffolk on the key factors and objectives desired for the incoming Chief of Police and future direction of the department.

Cuffee-Glenn would like the position to be filled by spring, but notes that the City will exercise due diligence in the selection. “This process was designed to aid in finding the best candidate possible to lead Suffolk’s law enforcement team”, advised Cuffee-Glenn. “Suffolk has a reputation of having outstanding public safety agencies and we want to ensure that we have the best possible leader as our Police Chief”, she added.

##