

**NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Interim Chief of Police Named**

Suffolk, VA (December 23, 2008) City Manager Selena Cuffee-Glenn announced today the appointment of Thomas H. Townsend as Interim Chief of Police for the City of Suffolk, effective January 1, 2009. Townsend will be filling the opening created by the retirement of Chief William A. Freeman, who served the City of Suffolk for thirty-seven years.

Townsend comes to the City with over thirty years of experience in law enforcement. He joined the Hampton Police Department in January of 1974 and served as the Chief of Police from January 2000 until his retirement in 2004. While as Hampton's Chief of Police, Townsend exercised formal authority for the police function in the City of Hampton, a community of approximately 146,000 residents. The department consisted of 271 sworn officers, and 104 civilian employees, with an annual police budget of \$13,918,580 and E-911 budget of \$2,262,006.

As he rose through Hampton's ranks, Townsend served in virtually every area of the police department, including as Commander of Police Operations and the director of Internal Affairs. Townsend received numerous departmental honors during his tenure on the department including the Legion of Honor Award for being feloniously wounded in the line of duty, the Meritorious Service Award for distinguished service as a law enforcement officer and a Resolution from Hampton City Council in recognition of service to the citizens of Hampton, presented on April 14, 2004.

Townsend most recently served as the interim Superintendent of Western Tidewater Regional Jail from November 15, 2006 until August 15, 2008. Townsend has a Masters Degree in Public Administration from Old Dominion University and a Bachelor of Art Degree in Political Science from Christopher Newport College. He is a veteran of the United States Navy where he served on active duty from October 1970 to August 1972. He was assigned to the USS Hepburn, with two deployments to Vietnam.

Cuffee-Glenn is confident that Townsend's experience will provide the bridge that the department needs as the city searches for someone to fill the position permanently. "Having Tommy in place will allow the city the time required to find the perfect candidate to match Suffolk's needs," she advised. "We currently have an extraordinary police department and we want to find a Chief to complement its legacy of professionalism and integrity, while meeting the needs of our citizen and business communities" she added.

Townsend is excited about leading the Suffolk Police Department. He advised, "I am honored to have the opportunity to serve as the Interim Chief of the Suffolk Police Department. I am looking forward to working with the officers and staff of the department, as well as, other members of Suffolk's local government." Townsend further advised, "I am also anxious to work with Suffolk's citizens and businesses to insure that the Police Department's efforts continue to respond to the needs of an expanding City."

Townsend and his wife Melody have three children: Matthew, Sarah, and Courtney.

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