



City of Melissa
3411 Barker Ave.
Melissa, TX 75454
(972) 838-2338
<https://cityofmelissa.com/>

News Release

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Media Contact: Celso Martinez 972-623-8836

Longtime Melissa Police Chief announces retirement

MELISSA (February 7, 2023) The City of Melissa's longest serving Chief of Police has announced his retirement, closing a career marked by a six-fold increase in the number of department employees and the repeated recognition of the department's level of excellence.

Chief of Police Duane Smith will retire from the Melissa Police Department on Aug. 25, 2023, bringing an end to a professional career based on service to the nation as a member of the military and service to communities as a specialist in law enforcement. The City of Melissa will conduct a national search for his replacement.

Born in Kentucky, Chief Smith moved to Allen as an adolescent with his family. He attended schools in the Allen ISD, graduating from Allen High School in 1988. He enlisted in the US Army the following year and was assigned duty in Germany. After a four-year enlistment, he was honorably discharged and returned to Allen. In 1994, he applied for a position in the Collin County Police Academy, graduating as a certified patrol officer. He started his career as a reserve officer with the Blue Ridge Police Department, followed by service as a patrol officer with the Farmersville Police Department, the Westminster Police Department, and the Blue Ridge Police Department.

In late 2000, he was hired by the Melissa City Marshal's Office. Shortly after arriving in Melissa, the department was officially designated as a Police Department. The following year, he was promoted to Sergeant, and a year later, he was tapped as interim Police Chief upon the departure of the department's first Chief.

While the City was searching for a new Police Chief, the Mayor and City Council offered the position to Chief Smith. He was named Chief of Police in May 2002. At the time, Chief Smith was one of three fulltime officers, supported by a parttime officer and an administrative assistant.

Today, the department includes the Chief, an Assistant Chief, two detectives, 11 patrol officers, two patrol sergeants, an administrative sergeant, a police services officer, a parttime warrant officer, and one civilian. The department is looking to fill two openings for patrol officers.

Chief Smith's long tenure has been characterized by his constant striving for excellence. Under his guidance, the department prepared for the rigorous Recognition designation from the Texas Police Chiefs Association (TPCA), a certification that the department is utilizing the latest in the industry's best practices.

The department was initially granted Recognition in 2014 and has been successful in renewing the designation twice. During his tenure, the department's record of safety has been unmarred. In 2007, he was elected to the North Texas Police Chiefs Association's (NTPCA) board of directors. He has served the board in every elected position, including President. As a member of the NTPCA, he has served as an affiliate representative to the TPCA.

"It's been an honor to have served the City of Melissa," said the Chief. "I wish to express my deepest gratitude to City Council members, past and present, City Manager Jason Little, and especially the professional officers of the Melissa Police Department with whom I have had the great pleasure of working over the years. Without their support, I would not have been able to achieve this success."

He plans to devote time to traveling and other pursuits.

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ABOUT THE CITY OF MELISSA – The City of Melissa is a fast-growing progressive suburb with a small-town feel, located 35 miles north of downtown Dallas in the dynamic growth area of northeast Collin County. Melissa sits on 21 square miles, is home to over 19,000 people, and is easily accessible by way of three intersecting highways. Melissa has ample inventory of the highly-sought-after undeveloped frontage available on US 75 and SH 121, primed to serve the commercial needs of a booming Collin County. Melissa is a home-rule municipality, governed by a council-manager form of government.