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News Release

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City of Melissa chooses Erik Stokes as Chief of Police *30-year law enforcement veteran starts Aug. 1*

MELISSA (July 14, 2023) – Following an extensive national search that yielded over 40 candidates from 11 states, the City of Melissa has named Erik Stokes as its new Chief of Police. Chief Stokes will assume the post on Aug. 1.

Chief Stokes was most recently Assistant Chief of Police in the Farmers Branch Police Department. The new Chief brings a wide range of experience to the position, amassed during his nearly 30 years in the law enforcement profession.

He began as a patrol officer in the Farmers Branch Police Department in 1994, and was promoted through the ranks to Investigator, Corporal, Sergeant, and Lieutenant. He was named Assistant Chief in 2020.

Melissa City Manager Jason Little led the City's search committee in reviewing all the candidates over a two-month period. The final selection, while challenging because of the high quality of applicants, reflects the City of Melissa's pledge to its residents and business owners to maintain the highest standards in its hiring practices.

"We are thrilled to bring Chief Stokes on as our Police Chief," he said. "We maintain a strong conviction that Melissa continues its commitment to select passionate leaders to meet the community's immediate and future needs. Chief Stokes will be a great fit for this premier department, and I am so honored he and his family will join this great City."

Chief Stokes holds a master's degree in Criminal Justice from Midwestern State University. He has also earned a Master Peace Officer certificate in addition to multiple law enforcement certifications. He is a graduate of the Institute for Law Enforcement Administration School of Police Supervision, the Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas, and the F.B.I. National Academy.

He was named Farmers Branch Police Officer of the Year in 2000 and Supervisor of the Year in 2014, among numerous other awards in his career. He has served as an advisor and supervisor for the Farmers Branch Police Explorer Post, a member of the Crime Prevention Association, Texas Police Chiefs Association, North Texas Police Chiefs Association, and the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

Chief Stokes replaces retiring Police Chief Duane Smith who steered the department from a four-person unit to the present well-equipped organization consisting of approximately 25 professional, highly-trained men and women. The Melissa Police Department has earned, and maintained, the coveted Recognized designation from the Texas Police Chiefs Association since 2014.

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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 23,000 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.