

NEWS RELEASE



CITY OF
LA MESA
JEWEL of the HILLS

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RAY SWEENEY APPOINTED LA MESA CHIEF OF POLICE

After conducting an extensive nationwide recruitment, La Mesa City Manager Greg Humora appointed Ray Sweeney to serve as La Mesa's next Chief of Police, effective immediately. Prior to this appointment, Sweeney served as a Captain with the La Mesa Police Department since 2015. Before joining the La Mesa Police Department in 2001, Sweeney served in the United States Army and subsequently, in the California Army National Guard. Sweeney holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice Management (Union Institute & University) and a Master of Science degree in Law Enforcement and Public Safety Leadership (University of San Diego).

Chief Sweeney will be launching a community engagement series to meet residents from throughout our City in the coming weeks to ensure all residents have a chance to meet him personally and share their views on the La Mesa Police Department. With the pandemic subsiding, the Chief plans on holding in-person meetings to emphasize his sincere interest in providing personal service in a professional, respectful, and effective manner.

City Manager Humora stated, "After a comprehensive and thorough recruitment process, I am confident Ray Sweeney is the leader we need to advance our Police Department and sustain our professionalism and focus on best practices to deliver for our community. The La Mesa Community will benefit from his immediate familiarity with our City and Police Department while also leveraging his strong character and clear vision for effective community policing."

"Having just hit a 20 year milestone with the La Mesa community, it is a huge honor and responsibility to be selected as the next Chief of Police. I am truly humbled to lead the great men and women of the La Mesa Police Department into the future, as we reimagine policing for our community. I have been fortunate to build great relationships throughout the community and look forward to forging new relationships in this important role. My commitment is to strengthen community trust, provide the best public safety services to all who live, work in, or visit our great City, and provide the most comprehensive training for our employees to accomplish this," said Chief Sweeney. "Policing is on the forefront of the mind of our community and our City leaders. I, too, wake up every morning thinking about how to best deliver for the residents and businesses of La Mesa."

Chief Sweeney developed a "[Six Step Action Plan](#)" that addresses a range of policy initiatives for the La Mesa Police Department. Concurrent with the Chief's appointment, the City has released his plan, and the Chief will be discussing the details with the community at the upcoming community meetings.

"As Mayor, I am committed to ensuring our residents have a voice on important issues. I sincerely appreciate the efforts of our Community Police Oversight Board (CPOB), Homeless Task Force, business representatives, and the faith community volunteering their time to assist our City Manager in making this decision. I have confidence our new Chief understands we must honor the past but also challenge the future by being more inclusive, listening to our residents, and making positive changes to our policing practices. I have seen Chief Sweeney in difficult situations and in casual community interactions. He is a consummate professional who represents the best of our Police Department and community values. Chief Sweeney has my full support, and I look forward to his efforts to advance our Police Department," stated La Mesa Mayor Mark Arapostathis.

"Over the past year, La Mesa has become more responsive to public concerns and developed a much better understanding of the failings of the system. The leadership is committed to reimagining public safety and policing in our City. The formation of the CPOB is just one of many steps in this process. Chief Sweeney has worked with this Board to develop a plan of action that will address necessary changes to become more responsive to the public's needs. Based on my experience, I am confident Chief Sweeney will do an excellent job leading the Department and supporting the efforts of our Board," said CPOB Chair Janet Castaños.

The City hired the executive recruiting firm Teri Black & Company (TBC) to conduct the national recruitment process. Prior to opening the recruitment, TBC gathered feedback from stakeholders and interested parties regarding "ideal qualities" for the next Chief of Police including input from the City Council, Citizen Public Safety Oversight Task Force, City staff, the Police Department and focus groups with community leaders. A community input outreach meeting was held on December 7, 2020, along with an online community survey. The search resulted in the receipt of 25 applications from across the United States including: 6 Hispanic males, 5 African American males and 1 female.

Using criteria developed in conjunction with feedback received during the process, TBC identified the six most highly qualified candidates and advanced them to interviews with two community stakeholder panels (consisting of representatives from: the CPOB, La Mesa Citizen Task Force on Homelessness, the local School District, La Mesa Police Officers Association, La Mesa business community and faith based community) and a professional panel (consisting of outside government executives in the San Diego region). Four candidates advanced to the final interview with the City Manager.

For additional information on the recruitment process please click the following link: <https://www.cityoflamesa.us/1647/Police-Chief-Recruitment>.

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