



City of Beacon, New York

Office of the Mayor

Lee Kyriacou, Mayor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CITY NAMES ACTING POLICE CHIEF, ENABLING PLANS TO FIND PERMANENT CHIEF

BEACON, NY – Mayor Lee Kyriacou nominated and the City Council unanimously approved the temporary appointment of William Cornett as Acting Chief of Police. The appointment at last night’s City Council meeting is an interim arrangement that enables the City to undertake a more deliberate and open process of finding a permanent Chief.

The interim appointment of Bill Cornett follows two Beacon Police Department retirements – that of Chief Kevin Junjulas and Captain Gary Fredericks – both of whom recently gave notice of retirement after more than thirty years of service, and who end their service today.

Bill Cornett is a former Beacon Police Department Lieutenant who has graciously agreed to come out of retirement to assist his community in this time of transition. Bill is a lifelong Beacon resident, and graduated from Fordham University with a bachelor’s degree in Sociology and a minor in Philosophy & Theology. During his career in the Beacon Police Department, Bill was FBI certified as an instructor in de-escalation techniques. He initiated the STOP-DWI program, prepared and submitted Uniform Crime Reports to the FBI, oversaw Beacon’s Traffic Division, and served on the Dutchess County Traffic Safety Board. Bill retired from the department in 2002 as senior lieutenant and continues to live in Beacon.

Mayor Kyriacou stated: “When the Beacon Police Department desperately needed to professionalize more than a decade ago, Bill was an honest, forthright and open senior officer, and who helped me immensely as a city council member to push for change. That change resulted in bringing in the U.S. Department of Justice, replacing the chief, resolving litigation, documenting procedures, and achieving state accreditation. Thank you, Bill for your help now with this important transition.”

Said the new Acting Chief Cornett, “If I can help my community during a difficult transition, I stand ready to serve.” Mr. Cornett has more than sufficient qualifications for the position, having served many years as the department’s senior lieutenant and when necessary acting chief. The temporary appointment is for 90 days and Bill has no interest in a permanent position.

Mayor Kyriacou also announced plans for a comprehensive and transparent search for a permanent Chief of Police. “Temporarily appointing Bill enables the city to begin a leadership process with sufficient time and without any predisposition toward interim leadership. The City will use a professional search firm to help us cast a wide net, and is drafting an open, inclusive process for finding and hiring a new permanent Chief of Police.”

About the City of Beacon:

Beacon, New York is located on the eastern shore of the Hudson River 60 miles north of New York City, with a population of 15,000. Originally a Native American settlement, the area was purchased from the Wappinger Tribe in 1683 and settled by Dutch and other Europeans, leading to the riverfront community of Fishkill Landing on the Hudson, and the mill community of Matteawan on Fishkill Creek. The two communities were incorporated together as the City of Beacon in 1913, named for the Revolutionary War signal fires on Mount Beacon. Beacon thrived as a 19th and 20th Century factory city, but as factories closed after WWII and the local economy declined, the city went through a period of hard times. Today, Beacon has successfully reinvented itself as a 21st Century river community centered around tourism, the arts and access to the scenic Hudson River heritage area. A diverse and thriving small city, it is now home to DIA:Beacon (one of the largest exhibition spaces for modern and contemporary art), a network of Hudson River parks connecting to Fishkill Creek and Mount Beacon trails, and a vibrant historic Main Street of art galleries, shops, cultural venues and restaurants.

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