

News from: **Office of the Mayor**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 14, 2014

Sean Whent named permanent chief of Oakland Police Department

OAKLAND – Sean Whent has led the Oakland Police Department as Interim Chief for a year that saw OPD making strong progress reducing crime and increasing reform, and he was named the permanent Chief of Police Wednesday.

“Today I am proud that we are naming Sean Whent as the permanent Chief of the Oakland Police Department,” Mayor Jean Quan said. “As a no-nonsense chief, he has led the Department’s reorganization, built a strong leadership team and strengthened police collaboration with neighborhood leaders. We’ve made significant progress in the last year in both reducing crime and completing mandated federal reforms. We have much more work to do, but Chief Whent has demonstrated he is the right person for the job.”

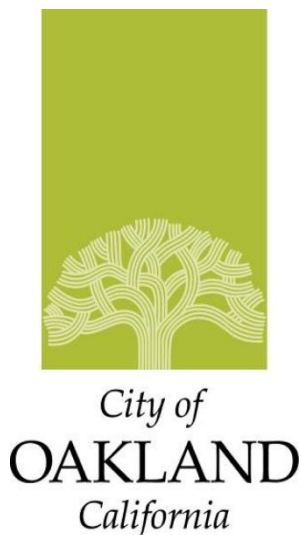
“I’m honored and humbled to accept the job, and I know it’s only with true partnership between our police and our communities that Oakland is getting safer,” Chief Whent said. “Every day I am inspired by the dedication and hard work of our officers, our community members, our command staff and our partners throughout the City. I am determined and confident that with this spirit of teamwork we will build on our successes and continue making Oakland safer.”

“Chief Whent’s work over the last year has proven that effective policing and community policing go hand in hand,” City Administrator Fred Blackwell said. “It’s no coincidence that as we’ve made progress in our reform efforts, we’ve also been able to start bringing down crime rates. Police who have the trust and respect of the community are more effective, and that’s the kind of Department Oakland deserves.”

In the 12 months Chief Whent served as Interim Chief:

- Oakland saw its second-largest decline in homicides in 40 years in 2013. Crime rates are continuing to drop, with year-to-date declines of more than 30 percent in shootings, robberies and home burglaries so far in 2014.
- OPD reorganized into five geographic areas, each with a captain responsible for tailoring crime-reduction strategies to that area. Captains are available and accountable to residents, making the Department’s leadership more accessible and flexible.
- The Department strengthened its work with Ceasefire and other community-police partnerships to reduce violence and increase collaboration between officers and residents.

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- In working to comply with court-ordered federal reforms, OPD “achieved its highest level of compliance since the beginning of our tenure,” court-appointed monitor Chief Robert Warshaw wrote in his most recent report.
- Work to grow the police force accelerated. In April, the largest-ever graduating class of new officers joined the force. An increasing number of new recruits are people of color, women, and officers who speak a second language. Work to recruit more residents is gaining traction, as the most recent academy to begin classes had the highest proportion of residents in recent years.

City Administrator Blackwell appointed Chief Whent to the permanent post, effective immediately. Whent’s salary will be \$226,438, with additional premium pay bringing his total annual compensation to \$251,113 excluding benefits and pension. Quan and Blackwell will seek confirmation from the City Council for a four-year contract term.

Chief Whent was appointed Interim Chief in May 2013. As planned, Mayor Quan and the City Administrator’s Office held off beginning the national search until August while Chief Whent and his command staff implemented the OPD reorganization. The Administration contracted the national search for an expected total of \$80,000. Chief Whent competed against a tough field of dozens of highly qualified candidates.

Chief Whent is an 18-year member of OPD. He began his career with OPD as a police cadet in 1994. He graduated from the 136th Recruit Academy in 1996. During his career, he has worked in the Patrol Division, Criminal Investigations Division, Support Operations Division, Internal Affairs Division and the Office of Inspector General. Prior to his appointment to Chief he was a Deputy Chief in charge of the Bureau of Risk Management.

Chief Whent has a Bachelor’s Degree in Criminal Justice from California State University East Bay and is near completion with his Master’s Degree in Criminology, Law and Society from the University of California, Irvine.

He is married and has three daughters.

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