



## **NEWS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release:**  
Friday, November 20, 2015

**Contact:** **Connie Cochran**  
**City Manager's Office**  
(209) 937-8827/(209) 629-1251  
connie.cochran@stocktonca.gov

### **CITY MANAGER ANNOUNCES HIRING OF KEY POSITIONS Stockton Fire and Office of Violence Prevention**

(Stockton, CA) – City Manager Kurt Wilson held a press conference today to announce the hiring of key positions in the Stockton Fire Department and the Office of Violence Prevention: Stockton Fire Chief and Office of Violence Prevention (OVP) Manager and Community Engagement Coordinator.

The City Manager announced the appointment of a permanent Fire Chief for the Stockton Fire Department, Chief Erik Newman. Chief Newman replaces interim Fire Chief Bill Weisgerber, who has led the department since July while the City conducted a nationwide search and recruitment. Chief Newman will join the City of Stockton leadership team effective December 16, 2015.

Chief Newman's fire service career spans 25 years. He comes to Stockton from the Clark County Fire Department in Las Vegas, Nevada, where he has served as Senior Deputy Fire Chief since December, 2011. Prior to Las Vegas, Chief Newman served with the Richmond Fire Department, Richmond, California, for over 20 years, first as a Fire Fighter, then Fire Engineer, Fire Captain, Training Director and Battalion Chief.

-more-more-more-

**City of Stockton**  
**News Release - Fire Chief & OVP**  
**Friday, November 20, 2015**  
**Page 2 of 4**

“I am pleased to welcome Chief Newman back to California where he will lead one of the hardest working departments in the state,” said City Manager Wilson. “His proven leadership experience in a large metropolitan fire department with a broad spectrum of fire suppression and hazardous response needs makes him a good fit for Stockton.”

As Senior Deputy Fire Chief in Clark County, Chief Newman is part of a leadership team that serves the Las Vegas Area – a 7,910 square mile metropolitan area of over 900,000 residents, with 29 fire stations staffed by professional firefighters in urban areas and 13 stations in the rural, unincorporated areas of Clark County staffed by volunteer firefighters. In addition to expansive commercial and residential areas, Las Vegas has one of the busiest airports in the nation, hosts 40 million visitors at major special events with huge crowds and high-rise and high-occupancy buildings and hotels, requiring a variety of training, equipment and apparatus for multi-hazard, multi-agency responses.

Chief Newman holds a Bachelor of Arts in Physical Education from Saint Mary’s College, Moraga, California, and an Associates of Liberal Arts from College of Southern Idaho, Twin Falls, Idaho. In addition, he has attended Reno Flammable Liquids Fire School in Reno, Nevada, and holds numerous certifications in firefighting, investigations, incident command, first responder, EMS, and other specialized areas of emergency response.

“I’m looking forward to this opportunity to lead a vibrant fire department at the City of Stockton,” said Chief Newman. “Stockton Fire Department has an outstanding reputation.

-more-more-more-

**City of Stockton**  
**News Release - Fire Chief & OVP**  
**Friday, November 20, 2015**  
**Page 3 of 4**

It is a forward-thinking organization, recognized as a regional leader in fire service, and I've been quite impressed with the firefighters that I have had a chance to meet."

At the same press conference, City Manager Wilson also introduced two appointments in the Office of Violence Prevention. The OVP is a division within the City Manager's Office with responsibility for working with the community on implementation of elements of the Marshall Plan on Crime, including Operation Peacekeeper, which includes gang intervention and working with those at-risk for gang involvement, and Operation Ceasefire. In addition to research and data analysis, the OVP organizes and collaborates with community-based organizations and criminal justice agencies on programs to reduce violence in the community.

La Tosha Walden has been appointed to the position of Manager in the Office of Violence Prevention (OVP), effective December 1, 2015. Mrs. Walden is currently with the San Joaquin County Probation Department where she has worked since 2003. She is a Probation Unit Supervisor, currently coordinating the Reducing Racial & Ethnic Disparities Grant, and previously held the positions of Domestic Violence Probation Unit Supervisor and Senior Officer in the Backgrounds & Training Unit.

Ms. Walden has deep roots in the community. She was born and raised in Stockton, and graduated from Stagg High School. Prior to serving with Probation, she began her law enforcement career in 1997 with the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Department assigned to

-more-more-more-

**City of Stockton**  
**News Release - Fire Chief & OVP**  
**Friday, November 20, 2015**  
**Page 4 of 4**

the Custody Division as a Correctional Officer and served special assignments as both a Classification and Training Officer.

Ms. Walden holds a Master's in Public Administration specializing in Organizational Leadership and a Bachelor's in Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing from National University.

Denise Manning has been appointed to the position of Community Engagement Coordinator in the Office of Violence Prevention. In this role, Ms. Manning will work with community-based organizations and agencies in support of the activities, clients, goals and objectives of the OVP.

Ms. Manning, who is originally from Stockton and a graduate of Edison High School, is also a U.S. Army combat veteran. She has extensive background in managing, coordinating and motivating teams, including over 13 years of military experience and 15 years of experience working with juvenile offenders and leading juvenile justice efforts in the state of Florida. She is a published author of books for youth transitioning from the juvenile justice and foster care systems and has served internationally as a life coach for youth and families. She has attended Fayetteville State University and is a graduate of Trident University International in Criminal Justice Administration.

Ms. Manning's appointment is effective December 1, 2015.

###