

TOWN OF VERNON

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Vernon Town Council Approves Mayor Champagne's Appointment of Marc Petruzzi as Next Vernon Police Chief

VERNON, Connecticut – The Vernon Town Council on Tuesday evening unanimously approved Mayor Dan Champagne's appointment of Marc Petruzzi as Vernon's next police chief.

Petruzzi, 48, is a 22-year veteran of the Connecticut State Police, where he attained the rank of captain. He is currently deputy police chief in Wethersfield and has served as the department's second-in-command since September 2022. He will begin work in Vernon on April 22.

The Glastonbury resident has extensive law enforcement and leadership experience. With the state police, his duties included serving as a patrol trooper, resident trooper, barracks commander in Colchester and Hartford, internal affairs investigator, chief of staff to the commander of state police administrative services and commander of the labor relations unit.

As captain and now deputy chief in Wethersfield, Petruzzi's responsibilities include budgeting and fiscal management, evaluation and rewriting of the department's general orders, introduction of new technology and equipment, hiring, community outreach, internal affairs, training and management of department logistics and strategic planning.

He earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Connecticut and master's degree from the University of St. Joseph. He is also a graduate of the FBI National Academy.

"The Vernon Police Department has a long and proud history of protecting and serving our community," Vernon Mayor Dan Champagne said. "Chief Petruzzi, with his diverse experience, will continue that tradition and take the department to a higher level of excellence."

Town Administrator and Emergency and Risk Management Director Michael Purcaro said he expects Petruzzi to use his leadership skills and extensive law enforcement background as well as his community and labor relations experience to enhance the department and local policing capabilities.

"Chief Petruzzi is a forward-thinking leader who embraces our core beliefs and values of community engagement and operational efficiency," Purcaro said. "Marc will be a valuable member of our leadership team."

Petruzzi's appointment followed a multi-step review process that included town leaders and police chiefs. There were candidates from Connecticut, across the nation, and Canada.

"Marc brings valuable state and local law enforcement experience to Vernon," said Avon Police Chief Paul Melanson, a member of the review panel and president of the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association. "Vernon had a great pool of candidates for chief. Marc rose to the top because of his experience and accomplishments."

Petruzzi values a collaborative leadership style, but also understands that the buck stops with him, Melanson said.

West Hartford Police Chief Vernon Riddick Jr., who also served on the review panel, said the breadth of Petruzzi's experience made him the top candidate.

"He understands the importance and necessity of establishing community policing and strong community ties," Riddick said. "He also appreciates the need to listen to officers and civilian staff and to address their needs and concerns."

Town Council member Maryann Levesque, who participated in the review process, said she came away viewing Petruzzi as proactive and collaborative, and focused on customer service and community relations.

"He values public engagement, which I believe is an important part of the job," Levesque said. "And he loves engaging with his officers and getting them to do the best work they can."

Former Town Council member Julie Clay participated in the practicum portion of the interview process.

"I was extremely impressed with how calm and professional he was, and how he dealt with the many facets of a rapidly evolving and extremely complicated crisis situation," she said. "He was very thoughtful, did not get flustered and remained level-headed in what was a very challenging exercise."

Petruzzi said he is ready to get to work.

"I look forward to joining the dedicated men and women of the Vernon Police Department as we continue to provide the highest level of service to the members of our community," Petruzzi said. "It is my hope that we can continue to work together as a department, and as a town, to make Vernon an even better place to live and work, and to make the Vernon Police Department the best police agency in Connecticut."

About the Town of Vernon

The Town of Vernon is a celebrated place to live, work and visit. From its beautiful parks and lakes, to its vast trails and historic homes and buildings, Vernon is a resilient and thriving community that promotes the health and wellbeing of its residents and values the natural environment. With a resident population of more than 30,000 and occupying 18.03 square miles, Vernon combines a balanced appreciation of history, and a strong economic base for growth, both residential and commercial. Located 15 minutes east of the Connecticut capital of Hartford, and 25 miles from the City of Springfield, Massachusetts, the Town of Vernon is strategically located in "New England's Knowledge Corridor" with close proximity to some of the top colleges and universities in the country.

Designated a certified Sustainable Community, the Town of Vernon offers a wide range of benefits and services to its residents. The Town of Vernon is a full-service municipality that practices a management philosophy of continuous quality improvement. To learn more about the Town of Vernon, please call (860) 870-3670 or visit www.vernon-ct.gov.

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