

Franklin Boyd hired as Gallup's new chief of police

Written by Cody Begaye & Staff
Friday, 19 April 2019 05:29



City leaders PLACE confidence in Boyd's abilities

The City of Gallup has chosen its next police chief, 21-year Gallup Police Department veteran Franklin Boyd, who in December received a “no confidence” vote from the Gallup Police Officers Association for the way he was reportedly running the department on an interim basis.

The vote breakdown from the association was sent to City Manager Maryann Ustick, but she said in a letter, responding to GPOA President Victor Rodriguez on Dec. 17, that the votes of no confidence against Boyd contain no “facts or allegations” about his conduct or actions.

In a release issued April 9, city officials said they felt that Boyd was the most qualified of the 31 people from across the country who applied for the job to replace Phillip Hart, who resigned last November, as police chief.

Boyd has been interim police chief since then. He also served as interim police chief for several months in 2015, before Hart was selected to run the department.

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He wasn't available for comment, per GPD Capt. Marinda Spencer, but Ustick weighed in on the newly-minted chief.

"I am delighted to have Franklin Boyd serve as our Chief of Police," she said in a news release. "He worked his way up the ranks of the Gallup Police Department, he has a distinguished record of dedicated service, integrity, and leadership, and he knows our community and the people we serve."

Mayor Jackie McKinney agreed, echoing Ustick's comments, saying Boyd recognizes the importance of continuity and consistency in the directing of the police department.

"I am confident that Boyd has the qualities needed to provide our officers and citizens the critical services for safety we expect in our community," McKinney said.

However, there have been hurdles along the way, where the spotlight shone brightly on Boyd – GPOA's vote of no confidence and one contentious lawsuit.

Out of 21 members present at the GPOA Dec. 13 meeting, 15 gave Boyd a vote of no confidence, four a vote of confidence, and two abstained. Boyd responded to "all-gallup-police" via email Dec. 19, stating the members voting against him, represent a small percentage of the 65 law enforcement personnel that work for the city.

"I would also be remiss if I didn't also acknowledge the personnel who have offered support and continued assistance in the last few days, and their continued commitment in moving our Department in a positive direction," Boyd said. "To them I would also say; stay focused on the positive and to continue to do the outstanding job you are doing."

"Unfortunately, there is a false perception (put out by a very small percentage) that the department is 'divided,' but the majority of the personnel of the Department know that is NOT the case," he continued. "So far, the department has been moving in a very positive and progressive direction in the last six months, and we will continue in that direction."

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However, the blowback from the association paled in comparison to the lawsuit filed against the city by GPD Lt. Rosanne Morrisette.

The problems between Morrisette and Boyd began when he was captain. According to reports, Boyd came into Morrisette's office at police headquarters and allegedly yelled at her for several minutes. She later filed a complaint against Boyd for his actions.

When Chief Robert Cron retired in 2016, several high-ranking officers decided to retire, too, and a number of positions opened up. As a result, Morrisette, who worked in the detective squad, was promoted from sergeant to lieutenant.

Her action against Boyd continued after he was promoted by Hart to be his deputy chief, and eventually, Boyd was reprimanded after an internal affairs investigation, according to sources. But when Morrisette asked to see a copy of the report, her request was reportedly rejected.

She filed suit in District Court to get that report released to her, and eventually, Judge Robert Aragon ruled in her favor, although it took some time for the city to comply with the order.

According to Morrisette's Attorney Thomas Grover, she continued to have problems with Boyd and Hart, and Boyd eventually issued charges against her, allegedly claiming that she was derelict in her duties.

As a result of these charges, Morrisette found herself demoted to sergeant and then to patrol status, before she was terminated outright. More legal battles ensued, and ultimately city officials became involved. As a result, the city reinstated Morrisette with back pay, and a position as liaison with the schools and community was created for her.

On April 9, after repeated requests, the city released the applications of those individuals who were considered finalists for the position.

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During the Gallup City Council's regular meeting that same evening, Acting City Manager Jon DeYoung said Boyd was out of the office for training, which was confirmed by Capt. Marinda Spencer on April 10, and that the announcement time of the chief's swearing in ceremony at Gallup Police Department would follow soon.

Boyd will officially start as police chief on April 15.

THE REST OF THE CANDIDATES

The minimum qualifications called for a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with major course work in criminology, police science, criminal justice, business administration, public administration or a closely related field.

Boyd holds an associate's degree in Criminal Justice from University of New Mexico-Gallup. He began classes in 1997 and graduated in 2018.

Additionally, the candidates needed at least 10 years of service within a local government police department with at least five years in a progressive supervisory capacity of police captain or higher.

The *Sun* reached out to the City of Gallup's Human Resources Director Klo Abeita several times to ask who was on the selection committee, but didn't receive a response as of press time.

The finalists:

Charles Carafino, from Damascus, MD. He has 24 years of experience working for the Montgomery County Police Department in Maryland. He is currently a captain in the

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department.

Samson Cowboy, who is currently police chief of the Jicarilla Apache Tribe in Dulce. He is a former chief of police for the Navajo Nation. He is from the Thoreau area.

Daniel Dugatkin, who is from New Paltz, N.Y. He has been chief of police for the last seven years for the SUNY College at New Paltz.

Joey Comstock, who is the current police chief for the Sauk-Suiattle Trina, Police Department in Darrington, Wash.

Benny Gaona, a graduate of Gallup High School with 24 years in the Gallup Police Department. He is currently a patrol sergeant in the department.

Jeffery Gilbert, who is currently police chief of the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe in Port Angeles, Wash. Before that he worked for 17 years with the Quartzsite Police Department where he rose to the rank of chief of police.

John Gruszka, who has worked for the Lake County Police Department in Crown Point, Ind., where he is presently a commander in the department.

Brian Paulson, who has worked for the Yankton Police Department in Yankton, S.D. for the past eight years as police chief.

Earl Andy Yearley, who has worked for the Gallup Police Department since 1994 and is currently a patrolman first class in the department. He also worked for the New Mexico State Police as a recruit.

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