

Press Release

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Issued By: Aaron W. Sims, Mayor, City of Monticello

To the Monticello Community:

The foundation of my mayoral campaign was the importance of developing our downtown, maintaining a safe community and the sustainability and improvement of our City Parks. Quality of life has been at the forefront of my agenda. This all remains my focus today.

As you know, I ran a campaign that focused on a positive message, small town values, and solutions rather than negativity.

After my successful election, my attention turned towards accomplishing the goals I laid out in our campaign. To accomplish this I know it would take a strong team and strong leaders within the various City Departments. What I have found is we are extremely fortunate to have many great leaders, but there are also opportunities for improvement and/or change.

I understood that any change can be welcomed by many, but also equally uncomfortable and concerning for others. Prior to making any significant changes, I reached out to the Monticello community and initiated discussions regarding the pros and cons of various decisions. A predominate topic that kept rising to the top of discussions was the Monticello Police Department and the Monticello Fire Department.

After listening, I believed that the appointment of an Interim Chief of Police with previous experience provided a solution to assist me and our community with improved communication, help train and mentor new leadership and build relationships with our county partners. Public safety is a priority for any Mayor and building a long-term plan seemed

prudent. As I was looking to the future, I believed that one of the current members of our police force would have made a great Chief with a little more training and experience. So, I asked former Chief of Police, Curt Blount to come back to the department as Interim Chief and provide mentorship and training for up to one year. I believe this would have provided a good transition to new leadership and enable me as Mayor to put a good long-term plan in place for the department.

As you know this decision was met with resistance from some in the community and some on the police force. Considering this, Interim Chief Blount offered me his resignation and I accepted it. With that, I am currently looking to fill the position of Chief of Police for the Monticello Police Department.

I take full responsibility for all my decisions. I deeply regret any hardship that this course of events has caused for members of this community and the Monticello Police Department. That certainly was not my intention.

I am here to serve. I will listen to your voices, and we will move forward together. It is time to build an even better Monticello for us and for generations to come.

Very sincerely yours,

Aaron W. Sims, Mayor