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Please see note at the end of this release.

Police and Fire Commission Appoints Capt. Andre Sayles as Beloit Police Chief

April 14, 2021 - The Beloit Police and Fire Commission unanimously appointed Beloit Police Captain Andre Sayles as the next Chief of Police for the City of Beloit Police Department Wednesday afternoon.

“We are extremely pleased that after a nationwide search, we had two internal candidates rise to the top and remain there until the end,” said Beloit Police and Fire Commission President Rongal Watson. “This really speaks to the quality of the public servants that we have working for us in our community at the Beloit Police Department.”

Sayles joined the City of Beloit Police Department in 2005 as a patrol officer. He was promoted to sergeant in 2013, to lieutenant in 2017 and to captain in 2020. Sayles holds a Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice from Iowa Wesleyan University. He currently is seeking his Masters of Criminal Justice with an emphasis in Criminal Justice Management from UW-Platteville. He will be sworn into office this spring; details will be announced at a later date.

Sayles currently oversees the City of Beloit Police Department’s Patrol Division, Tactical Operations Unit, Crisis Negotiations Unit, Community Service Officers, and community outreach efforts.

“It is a great honor and privilege to follow those who have made the City of Beloit Department a place of honor and respect,” Capt. Sayles said. “I am looking forward to continuing that work in the department and in the city. My passion is for community policing and doing my part to build a stronger and safer community for all people.

“Thank you to the Beloit Police and Fire Commission for entrusting me with this important role. Most of all, thank you to my family for all of the sacrifices you have made along the way to support my policing career.”

Capt. Sayles’ top three short-term goals for the department are to:

- Reduce crime
- Improve community trust
- Implement a peer-support program

“Our department needs to be accessible to our community; we often respond to people in crisis on the worst day of their lives, so building those relationships now is crucial for our department. We need to use our de-escalation tactics, hone our skills, and ultimately listen to our community members so that we are being good stewards of the people we are sworn to protect and serve.”

“This new mission isn’t about me. It’s about our city and the men and women guarding it. I know I’m the chief, my officers know and my community knows. We have work to do collectively to assist the City of Beloit in becoming a prime place for residents to call home. I’m excited to get to work with the department, city employees and most importantly the community.”

Chief of police appointments in Wisconsin communities with populations over 4,000 are made by the community’s Police and Fire Commission, whose members are appointed by the municipality’s elected officials.

The Beloit PFC held a community forum last week for residents to learn more about both finalists. While the decision was difficult, Watson said, community input was crucial.

“Both candidates were extraordinary and this could not have been a more difficult decision,” Watson said. “The community spoke, and we listened. I’ve had the distinct pleasure of witnessing Capt. Sayles’ character and commitment to the community over the last few years, and I am overjoyed that he will represent the Beloit Police Department to the entire city. Given the challenges that policing is facing regionally and nationally, I am looking forward to seeing the way Beloit emerges as a leader in community-driven policing under Capt. Sayles’ leadership.”

Finally, recognizing the increase of gun violence in Beloit, Sayles urges community members to speak up and collaborate with officers to deter senseless crimes and violence from harming our community. He plans to focus on community-based policing to help forge officer-resident relationships to build trust and understanding.

“As police reform measures are being placed into action across many municipalities, as advocacy for reform grows, moreover as our nation is in the midst of the trial for the death of George Floyd, we continue to be confronted with examples of excessive use of force, lack of transparency and understanding of the precept for police engagement fitting the encounter, and another unfortunate fatality of a person of color,” Sayles said.

“Yes, complete pictures of the events and actions surrounding the vehicle stops of Army 2nd Lt. Caron Nazario and Daunte Wright, which ended tragically, are still being investigated, but it begs the question people of color have asked for years - how do we

keep ending up here? How do we keep ending with physical force exceeding the perceived infraction? And why?”

“My thoughts and sincere prayers are with those at the center of these latest tragic circumstances; the City of Beloit Police Department remains committed as a partner for improved relations between public safety and the community, for transparency around deployed actions of force, and as importantly, advocating for justice through action.”

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Capt. Sayles will not be available for interviews today. Please contact Director of Strategic Communications Sarah Lock to arrange future interviews by emailing locks@beloitwi.gov. She will begin responding to inquiries after 8pm today.