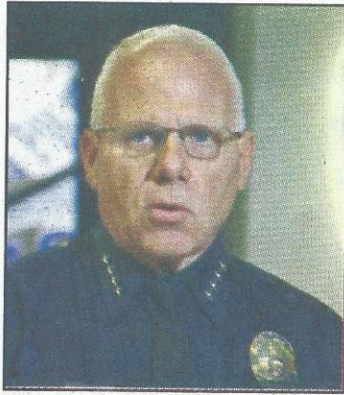


New West Covina City Manager Fires Both Police and Fire Chiefs



Police Chief Marc Taylor

By George Ogden

WEST COVINA - After 3 weeks as West Covina's "New" City Manager, David Carmany, has fired both the Police Chief and the Fire Chief. David Carmany took Chris Freeland's place when he was fired by the majority vote of the city council. The firings were done 90 days after the election which is the time period the council is required to wait before they can take action for a termination. Although, it was stated by the city that Chris Freeland resigned, it was interesting that he was not allowed to pick up his personal items and they were packed up for him.

Within a short period of time they came up with a number of city manager candidates and David Carmany became a favorite and he was hired. Mayor Lloyd Johnson and Councilwoman Jessica Shoemaker did not favor this action and voted no.

Police Chief Marc Taylor had 33-years with the West Covina Police Department. Fire Chief Larry Whithorn, who took over as chief in 2015, served 29 years in the West Covina Fire Department. Both men were directed by the City Council to cut back on costs and were given directives that they had to follow. The



Fire Chief Larry Whithorn

file and rank for both departments were hit financially as the city is strapped for funds and is cutting back in all departments. Both chiefs were told exactly what to do and they followed those orders that were given to them. This may have caused bad feelings by the police officers and firemen towards their chiefs. There was a no-confidence vote by the Fire Association back in September of 2017 because of cutbacks and retaliation complaints. Sadly, Whithorn became extremely ill and was off for several months.

Taylor was taken aback by the method of his termination by the City Manager. It appears that the City Manager was able to figure out that both of these men needed to be terminated in just three weeks. Both men were loved by the majority of community and are shocked at the disgraceful way they were let go. Mayor Lloyd Johnson was asked by this paper for a comment and in a rather loud voice said, "I HAVE NO COMMENT!!!" and at that point he terminated the conversation. What was also very sad, both Mayor Johnson and Chief Taylor were at the city hall at the same time. The chief was being terminated and the mayor was at-



New Police Chief Richard Bell

tending to other business. They both left the building at the same time and the Mayor, being left in the dark, didn't know about the termination of the chief and while in the elevator, told him to have a great day. When he found out that Taylor had just been terminated later in the day, he recalled that he told the chief, "to have a great day." He contacted the now former chief about his comment and explained he didn't have a clue as to what had transpired.

Captain Richard Bell has been elevated to Chief temporarily which could be a permanent position for him.

Many feel that West Covina is on a "self-destruct" path and this will most likely cost the city more money that they don't have. Many are angered at the way these men were terminated. Basically saying, "No class as these men deserved better than this."

It is unknown what the payouts will be for both chiefs, however there is nothing there to say that they may look to seek a further settlement against the city.

The costs for replacing all three, both chiefs and the city manager will put a dent into the city's bank accounts and without a doubt, you will see a new sales tax for the City of West Covina.