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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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March 24, 2021

**MORRO BAY FIRE CHIEF STEVE KNUCKLES ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT
CITY INITIATES RECRUITMENT FOR NEW FIRE CHIEF**

Morro Bay, Calif. – The City Council approved a temporary contract with Fire Chief Steve Knuckles for him to remain with the City as Fire Chief until July 31, 2021. This will allow the City to conduct a full recruitment for his successor, while maintaining continuity of leadership of the Fire Department under Chief Knuckles stewardship through the recruitment process.

Chief Knuckles has served the City of Morro Bay for 22 years, beginning as a Fire Captain Paramedic in 1999. He was promoted to Fire Chief in 2012, where he has led the department through multiple emergency incidents, increasing our community's response capabilities, emergency plan development and most recently orchestrates the City's emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Chief Knuckles continues his community service through the Rotary Club of Morro Bay, Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation, and as a coach at a local high school. Prior to coming to Morro Bay, Chief Knuckles started his fire career in 1982 as a Reserve Firefighter for the City of Atascadero promoting to a Fire Engineer Paramedic in 1993.

"Chief Knuckles has dedicated his life to the fire service and serving the community and leading the Morro Bay Fire Department," said City Manager Scott Collins. "Steve is an exemplary public servant and we greatly appreciate all he has done to transform the department, serve the community and lead the City through this challenging pandemic. We are excited for him as he prepares for the next stage of his career. I am grateful that he will continue to lead the department as we conduct the recruitment to fill the very big leadership shoes he will leave behind."

"This has been a difficult decision for myself and my family. I have been very blessed to work with a high performing group of men and women in the Fire Department that really want to make a difference in their community. My collaboration with the entire City staff has shown me the incredible professionalism and pride our City staff performs every day. This Fire Chief assignment has made me a better person" states Chief Knuckles.

The City initiated the recruitment for the new Fire Chief earlier this week. The City will engage outside support to facilitate the recruitment process and include the community, Fire professionals from the area and the Fire Department staff in the process to ensure a good fit in the next Chief.



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