



SALEM FIRE-EMS NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release December 30, 2014

DEP. CHIEF JOHN PRILLAMAN NAMED SALEM'S NEW FIRE CHIEF

Salem City Manager Kevin Boggess announced this afternoon that Deputy Chief John Prillaman has been named the new Fire and EMS Chief for the city effective January 1, 2015. Prillaman will replace Chief Pat Counts, who is retiring December 31 after 40 years of service to the city.

"I am humbled and honored to be the one selected to work alongside the men and women of the Salem Fire and EMS Department," says Prillaman. "I appreciate the city manager entrusting me with the responsibility of serving and protecting our citizens."

Prillaman joined the Salem Fire and EMS Department in 1998 and was promoted to Senior Firefighter in 2001. In 2005, he attained the rank of Lieutenant and Training Officer, and was named a Captain in 2006 and Deputy Fire Chief in May of 2010. Before coming to Salem, he served 11 years as a Volunteer Firefighter in Roanoke County where he rose to the position of Fire Chief of Company 11.

In addition, from 1991-95 he was a Fire Protection Specialist in the United States Air Force. He received several medals and accommodations during his time of service and also graduated with honors from the Fire Academy at Chanute Air Force Base in Illinois.

"In my 25 years of serving as a volunteer firefighter, military firefighter and career firefighter I have been very fortunate to have some great mentors who have helped me develop as a leader," says Prillaman. "I am very grateful to each and every one of them, and I hope to make them proud as I lead this great organization."

Prillaman earned his Bachelor's degree in Fire Administration as an honors graduate of Hampton University in 2004. In 2007, he acquired his Master's degree in Public Administration from Virginia Tech. Prillaman also graduated from the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer School earlier this year. In addition, he has served for the past four years on the Virginia Fire Chiefs Association Board of Directors and he was instrumental in the research, design and construction of the state-of-the-art Roanoke Valley Regional Fire Training Tower on Kessler Mill Road.

“Chief Prillaman is yet another example of Salem's efforts to attract, develop and retain great leadership talent,” says Boggess. “He has worked his way through the ranks and I am very proud to be able to promote him to the Chief's position.”

“The Salem Fire and EMS Department is blessed to have a great deal of bright and passionate fire officers and firefighters who understand what fire service is all about,” says Prillaman. “As Fire Chief, my main goal is to ensure that each and every one of our personnel return home safely to their families after each shift.”

Prillaman is a Roanoke County native and 1990 graduate of Cave Spring High School. When he returned to the area after serving in the Air Force in 1997, he actually began working for Salem's Streets and Maintenance Department in the sign shop and in building maintenance.

He and his wife, Loretta, reside in Salem with their two children.

Contact:

Mike Stevens
City of Salem
Communications Director
(540)375-4112 - office
(540)353-2041 - cell
mstevens@salemva.gov