
For Immediate Release

Date: November 3, 2021

Contact:

Susan B. Weis

<mailto:sweis@fuquay-varina.org>

Office: 919-552-1417

Mobile: 919-605-0765

Fuquay-Varina Police Chief Laura Fahnstock Announces Retirement

Following notice to the Town Manager and Town Board on Monday, November 1st, Chief Laura Fahnstock announced her intentions to retire effective February 1, 2022. Fahnstock, who is the first female Police Chief in Fuquay-Varina, has served for close to seven years and her retirement caps off a 30-year career in law enforcement that is both distinguished and extraordinary.

“During Fahnstock’s service in Fuquay-Varina, the police department has advanced in many areas and continues to grow through an infusion of a customer-service based, problem-solving, intelligence-led policing, and community policing models. The approach has been successful in developing positive relationships between law enforcement and the community,” said Mayor John W Byrne.

Due to Fahnstock’s leadership in developing community policing programs, in the past five years, the Town of Fuquay-Varina saw a 50% decrease in violent crimes and a 42% reduction in property crimes. In 2021, the Town was recognized by MoneyGeek as the #1 safest Town in North Carolina and was ranked by SafeWise on the Top #10 List of Safest Places to Live in North Carolina.

Fahnstock also brought several operational and staffing improvements to the police department to provide efficient and effective strategic planning to address organizational change, Town growth, community needs, employee development and trends in policing. During her tenure, the department moved to a new and larger facility; increased technology to include adding body cameras; staff size increased from 36 to 59 officers; 50,000 hours of training hours were provided to police personnel; the career ladder was updated providing over 70 career ladder advancements in six years; diversity within the department was increased and the department added its first canine officer.

While Fahnstock’s record as crime fighter is impressive, Chief Fahnstock will likely be remembered in the Fuquay-Varina community for the strong relationships she built and her personable and transparent approach in working with the public. Fahnstock gained national attention from these positive interactions and the unique community outreach programs she helped to foster. The video series, “*The Other-Side*” paired youth from elementary school through high school with a Fuquay-Varina Police officer to have

conversations, sometimes about difficult topics, and the series won national acclaim for fostering an overall better understanding about people in the community.

“Thank you to the Town of Fuquay-Varina for the opportunity to serve as your police chief,” said Chief Fahnestock. “Serving as police chief here has been one of the great honors of my life. I am grateful for the privilege of working with some of the most impressive police officers throughout my career, especially those here in the Town that have displayed bravery, professionalism, dedication, and compassion in their work. I take with me wonderful memories and friendships. Thank you to the community for working with me and my leadership team, collaborating in many ways to enhance safety, develop positive police and community relationships, and improve quality of life within our community. The Department and Town are better for these relationships that have been built and I trust in my team to continue to deliver exceptional law enforcement services for years to come based on the foundations and leadership philosophy developed over the past six years. This chapter of my life, spanning over 30 years of public service, is coming to a close, and I am looking forward to new opportunities in the future. While I no longer serve in the role of police chief after February 1, 2022, I will continue to support my community and the Fuquay-Varina Police Department as a private citizen. Many exciting plans are awaiting me, and I look forward to spending time with my family and friends. Continue to support the men and women of the Fuquay-Varina Police Department as they need your support every day.”

Town Manager Adam Mitchell said, "When interviewing Chief Fahnestock, I knew immediately that she was different and special. She set herself apart from all the other candidates. I was confident that she had the experience, vision, and personality to yield phenomenal results within the department. I can honestly say that Laura Fahnestock is one of the best hires I have ever made. She possesses integrity, compassion, and creativity; all attributes that made her a successful Police Chief. I could go on and on about Laura's accomplishments and achievements and how she helped the men and women in the department become better law enforcement professionals. I believe the community knows and appreciates the value she has added. I will miss her leadership and am so very grateful for the service she provided the citizens of Fuquay-Varina."

Prior to becoming Chief of Police in Fuquay-Varina, Fahnestock served as a distinguished law enforcement officer for twenty-four years in a variety of roles with the City of Rocky Mount. Laura is married to Van Fahnestock. They will continue to reside in Fuquay-Varina.