



## Toledo mayor names interim police chief and new city prosecutor



NANCY GAGNET

The Blade

ngagnet@theblade.com

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Toledo Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz has tapped Deputy Police Chief Michael Troendle to serve as the city's interim police chief.

Extensive experience and knowledge of the department made him an excellent candidate for the job, Mr. Kapszukiewicz said at a Thursday news conference.

"I don't know that there are too many individuals in the department who have the breadth or experience and knowledge that he does; he truly has checked every box," Mr. Kapszukiewicz said.

Mr. Troendle, who will officially take over Monday for retiring chief George Kral, is a 29-year member of the department. He has worked in a variety of areas including field operations, investigation, SWAT, intelligence, and special operations, the mayor said.

Mr. Troendle was named deputy chief five years ago. He credits Chief Kral for providing a “road map” to move the department forward while engaging the citizens of Toledo to “trust us and buy into what we are doing at the police department.”

“I hope to continue those relationships and build upon them,” he said. “I am truly humbled and honored to lead the men and women in what I believe to be the best police department in the United States.”

Chief Kral announced his intention to retire in August and Toledo City Council approved up to \$50,000 in October to hire the national recruiting firm Ralph Andersen & Associates to help identify, screen, and evaluate potential candidates to replace him.

According to the mayor, nine individuals have applied for the position thus far, in which a new chief is expected to be named in March. Like other Toledo police officers, the newly hired chief will not be required to live in Toledo city limits, said city spokesman Gretchen DeBacker.

Newly appointed interim Chief Troendle, who, according to the Ohio Secretary of State’s website, is registered to vote in a Toledo suburb, has not yet applied for the job, but he plans to.

“At this time, I feel that I am the right fit to get in there and lead our department,” he said after the news conference. “One of the biggest things that we can do right now is let our officers know that it’s OK to be the police, it’s OK to go out there and do the job that you are trained to do. We need you out there doing it.”

At a staffing level of approximately 620 officers, he acknowledged that the department is not at full strength, and he hopes to bolster those numbers with new recruiting methods, including a plan that would make it easier for officers from other departments to transition to Toledo.

The mayor has said that 700 officers would be a desirable strength, he added.

“It’s getting harder and harder to get people to come through that door,” interim Chief Troendle said. “We need to make sure that we are getting the message out to our people that this is still an honorable profession, that this is a great career, and you can make a big difference here.”

Toledo ended 2022 with 65 homicides, a slight decrease over 2021 in which 71 homicides were reported.

While many factors could be attributed to gun violence in Toledo, the mayor said during the news conference that approximately 70 perpetrators could be linked to a majority of crime that happens in Toledo.

Those individuals are well known to police, and often if arrested are released by a “revolving door” court system, which has a backlog of cases because of the pandemic, Mr. Kapszukiewicz said.

During a committee hearing last month, Chief Kral backed that sentiment when he commented that 99 percent of those arrested in the past year were released after arraignment.

“We will continue to work the problem,” Mr. Kapszukiewicz said. “In a situation like this there are a lot of factors involved, there are a lot of issues at play. Things are moving in the right direction and with this team in place it will continue to move in the right direction.”

In addition to naming an interim police chief, the mayor also named Rebecca Facey as the new city prosecutor. She replaces the former prosecutor Dave Toska, who recently retired.

The city’s prosecutor’s office handles primarily misdemeanor cases, including serious ones like domestic violence cases as well as assault cases and driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Other cases involve theft, trespassing, and traffic-related matters.

Formerly serving as a Lucas County assistant prosecutor, Ms. Facey specializes in domestic violence cases and that experience will help to guide her work in Toledo, she said.

Thousands of domestic violence misdemeanors are charged in Toledo Municipal Court each year, and often the cases are dismissed based on victims’ failure to appear. By applying evidence-based prosecution, regardless of victim participation, Ms. Facey hopes to move the cases forward.

“It’s going to need to be a collaborative effort to take a different approach to domestic violence cases, but I am looking forward to it,” she said. “We are fortunate to have a strong and talented group of attorneys representing the

citizens of Toledo in the city prosecutor's office, and I am eager to work with each of them as we strive to bring truth, justice, and safety to our community."

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**Nancy Gagnet**

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