









Toledo - Police

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Top cop quits at odds with new mayor

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As the new guard of elected officials was taking over city hall yesterday, Marti Felker walked out of the Safety Building for the last time as chief of police.

Citing irreconcilable differences with Mayor Carty Finkbeiner, Chief Felker said it was his time to go.

"There is too much to be done in this city to deal with an individual that won't even discuss the issues," Chief Felker said yesterday morning.

Chief Felker said efforts to discuss the future of the division with Mayor Finkbeiner have been unsuccessful since the November election.

Mayor Finkbeiner has maintained since his campaign that there was a need for new blood in the chief's position.

City council Friday approved a settlement package, which identified the chief's retirement as one "in



Felker:
critical

good standing."

Chief Felker said the future of the division will depend on the role the new mayor chooses to play in division policies.

"It all depends. If the mayor decides he is going to come over and dictate new officers and new programs, that would have a disastrous effect," he said. "The past administrations have used the expertise and advice of the members of this division."

Replacing Chief Felker as acting chief of police is James Wiegand, 46, deputy chief of the investigative services bureau.

The 24-year police veteran took over the reins of the police division at noon yesterday. He will remain in command until a permanent replacement is hired.

"I've worked in the past with the mayor and his three top administrators. I feel relatively comfortable with them," Chief Wiegand said. "I believe that I was named because they have confidence in me."

Chief Wiegand said he is not seeking the position permanently.

"My goal right now is to work an additional eight years. I don't know if I could last that long as chief," he said. "That's not to say that may not change. But, at this point, it's not

my plan to seek the permanent position."

Chief Felker said the permanent chief should be hired from within the division.

"I think bringing a chief from outside in order to be impartial and with no ties to the department — if that is correct — then that same logic must be used for the election of the mayor and council members," he said.

"It doesn't make any sense to say a chief promoted from within can't do a good job."

A major rift between the outgoing chief and Mayor Finkbeiner has been caused by a criticism that Chief Felker had not moved quickly enough to implement community-oriented policing.

Chief Felker said that philosophy of law enforcement always has been a goal in the division, but true community policing cannot be achieved without a commitment from all areas of government.

"The frustrating thing with community policing is that everyone thinks it's just police doing it in the community," he said. "It needs to be police with citizens and government. If this is where Carty wants to go, he needs it to be a priority for all of the departments in the city."

The inadequate level of manpower remains the division's greatest weakness, and without a commitment to restoring the number of sworn officers to its authorized strength of 775, any attempts to put more officers in neighborhoods will be futile, he said.

Chief Felker's resignation yesterday ended his 26-year career with the police division.

He was appointed in 1967 and worked as a patrol officer until 1973. He was an accident investigator in the traffic section from 1973 to 1976 before being promoted to sergeant and assigned to head the robbery and homicide units.

In 1977, he became an internal affairs investigator and was promoted to lieutenant. He headed the section in 1981. When he was promoted to captain in 1984, he was reassigned to head the crimes against persons section.

Chief Felker said he has no plans to rush into another job right away.

"I want to take some time off, relaxing and doing with my family some things I haven't been able to do," he said.

"I don't feel tomorrow morning I have to get out and find a job."