

James Whiteford takes oath as Deputy Fire Chief for the city of Edwardsville

by Steven Spencer, Staff Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE - James Whiteford took the oath of Deputy Fire Chief for the Edwardsville Fire Department at Tuesday night's city council meeting.

Chief Welle congratulated and thanked Whiteford for his dedication to the department and the community saying it's just one more step forward for the department.

"This is something that has been a while coming," Chief Welle said. "I can think of no person that better fits the need currently for this department other than Deputy Chief Whiteford. I congratulate him for the hard work that he has done over the past several years working with me and with the department, bettering himself with his training. He finished the National Fire Academy Executive Officer Fire Program, that's a four-year program, a tremendous feather in his cap. This is just another step toward the professionalization of the Edwardsville Fire Department."

Mayor Hal Patton also congratulate Whiteford on behalf of the council and the city.

"The additional things that our department does beyond fighting fires, reviewing plans, inspecting buildings, helping and assisting our residents with child safety seats, just so many things. We really appreciate the professionals that you've developed," Mayor Patton said.

After taking his oath stating that he will support the constitution and faithfully discharge the duties as deputy chief, Whiteford said it's been a privilege to serve the city of Edwardsville for 21 years.

"In the past 21 years, I've seen city grow and the fire department nearly double in size," Deputy Chief Whiteford said. "This holds true for the number of calls per service, number of employees and now the square footage of buildings that we work out of. It's with a certain humility and respect that I step into this position. After all we would not be here today without the support of the fire fighters who have placed their trust in me, the drive of the fire chief who has worked relentlessly to improve this department. Please know, I will do my very best to serve this fire department and this community. I am very grateful for this opportunity."

Thanking everyone who has put their trust in him, Whiteford said he wouldn't have been able to make such accomplishments without the support of his wife and family.