



NEWS ADVISORY

Dec. 6, 2011

For immediate release

Mayor Taps Jason Diehl as Fire Chief

Members of the Missoula City Council will consider Mayor John Engen's recommended appointment of Assistant Fire Chief Jason Diehl as Fire Chief on Wednesday, Dec. 7, at 9:30 a.m. at the Public Safety & Health Committee meeting in City Council Chambers.

Committee members will discuss the appointment and forward a recommendation for consideration by the entire Council at the evening meeting on Monday, Dec. 12.

Considering Diehl's long experience and expertise, Mayor Engen sees no need for a lengthy hiring process.

"I've got nothing but respect for Jason and confidence in his ability to lead the Missoula Fire Department and serve as an integral member of our management team," he said.

If confirmed by the Council, Diehl will replace Fire Chief Mike Painter, who will retire Dec. 31 after serving the City of Missoula for 31 years. Painter supports Diehl's nomination.

"Our department and community are fortunate to have someone of Jason Diehl's caliber interested in serving as Missoula's next fire chief," Painter said. "Jason has a continuing commitment to improving the service of the Missoula Fire Department. He has helped develop the high standards set for and by the men and women of MFD – and he understands the value of working as a unified team."

Diehl's appointment is also endorsed by the firefighters' union, IAFF Local 271.

"Jason has not only earned the respect of his co-workers," President Jeff Kroll wrote in a letter of support. "He has also proven to be a very effective leader, and he is, in our opinion, the right person to lead us into the future."

Diehl has served as assistant chief since Jan. 30, 2005. He joined the Fire Department on June 1, 1990, after earning degrees in psychology and sociology at the University of Puget Sound. A graduate of Thompson Falls High School, Diehl has worked in all aspects of the Missoula Fire Department. He was instrumental in developing the 20-year Fire Master Plan; coordinated the construction of Stations #2 and #5, as well as the remodels of existing stations; wrote and

administered numerous grants to pay for the hiring of new firefighters, equipment updates and purchases; and negotiated a new performance agreement with the local emergency services agency. He is skilled in labor-management relations.

If approved by the Council, Diehl will begin serving as Fire Chief on Jan. 1, 2012.

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