



**CITY MANAGER COLUMN**

By Virginia Barney

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**FIRE CHIEF ROSS' IMPENDING RETIREMENT  
TRIGGERS SEARCH FOR HIS REPLACEMENT**

(Upper Arlington, Ohio) – Since my first Upper Arlington public service involvement began with the Fire Division after our family experienced a house fire, I have always felt a close affinity with the men and women willing to risk their own safety to protect ours. For the past 11 years, this team has been led by the extremely able and affable Mitch Ross, and it was with some sadness that I recently received news of his plans to retire early next year.

It has been an honor working with Mitch over the years, and he will be missed greatly by the City family and the community. He has timed his departure well, having steered our organization through the planning and construction of the new Fire Station 72, an achievement with which he should be very proud.

Looking ahead, the task of finding a new Fire Chief is now upon me. Since this is a position of great prominence and value to the community - one that warrants opportunity for feedback and involvement from the community - I am reaching out to you for your help. In particular, I would like to hear your thoughts on the following two questions:

- What qualities would you expect to see in the new Fire Chief?
- How could the new Fire Chief make the Fire Division more effective?"

Please email your suggestions by Monday, January 4 to my attention, at [vbarney@uaoh.net](mailto:vbarney@uaoh.net).

We are fortunate to have many exceptional men and women working within our Fire Division. In light of this, I have decided to initially focus our search for a new Fire Chief on internal candidates. Using the feedback obtained, the Fire Chief job description and necessary qualifications will be fine-tuned to best meet the community's needs.

The anticipated timeline for the search and selection process is as follows:

- The position will be posted internally from Monday, December 28, 2009 through Friday, January 8, 2010.
- The interview process will begin the week of January 11.
- The search committee is comprised of me, Police Chief Brian Quinn and Deputy City Manager – Human Resources Regina Ford Drzewiecki.

- During the first two weeks of February, a Community Advisory Board – comprised of representatives from key groups such as civic organizations, the Schools and business community – will meet with the top candidate(s) and make its recommendations to me based on a pre-determined set of criteria.
- If all proceeds on schedule, the successful candidate will be announced in early March.

Should no ideal internal candidate emerge at any point in this process, I may decide to broaden the search by posting the position externally. In such an event, an announcement would be made regarding the change in approach, anticipated timeline and steps in the process.

If you have questions about our search for the new Fire Chief, please contact my office at 583-5040.

### **Police Survey Reminder**

There are just a few days left for you to weigh in on the services provided by the City's Police Division, via its online survey. Please visit [www.uaoh.net](http://www.uaoh.net) and click on the link on the homepage to participate. The survey deadline is December 31.

### **City Seeking Community Awards Nominations**

*Deadline Friday, January 8, 2010*

Our annual State of the City Address will soon be here. As part of this important community gathering, we take time to recognize and celebrate individuals and entities in our community who have made a positive difference over the past year. I am of course referring to our Community Awards Program. Time is running out to get nominations in to us in the areas of: Business of the Year; Community Enrichment; Community Safety; Super Senior; and Youth. Visit [www.uaoh.net](http://www.uaoh.net) to learn more about our awards program and each category, as well as to download an application form.

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