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Union County Prosecutor's Office Assumes Responsibility of the Fanwood Police Department

On Monday morning, acting Union County Prosecutor Lyndsay V. Ruotolo announced she was exercising her supersession authority such that her office would begin temporarily overseeing the operations of the Fanwood Police Department. The assistance of the Prosecutor's Office was requested by Mayor Colleen Mahr and the Fanwood Borough Council following the departure of Chief Richard Trigo who advised both offices late Friday that he would be stepping down effective Monday, July 13, 2020.

Working with borough officials, the Prosecutor's Office will ensure continuity of operations and stability within the department while the Borough focuses on hiring and appointing new leadership and superior officers for the future of their department – a process already underway according to borough officials. At present, absent the chief, the highest ranking officers in the Department are three sergeants.

“Providing for the safety and security of our residents is our priority and this supervisory partnership makes sure that continues uninterrupted. In light of Chief Trigo stepping down and the recent retirement of other senior members of the Fanwood Police Department, the Borough Council and I sought the assistance of the County Prosecutor's office to ensure the continuity of services our Fanwood community relies upon and deserves while we seek new leadership for the Borough's law enforcement,” stated Mayor Mahr.

Ruotolo has appointed Captain Kevin Grimmer of her office to serve as the Officer in Charge of the Department under her leadership. Captain Grimmer is a 16 year veteran of the Union County Prosecutor's Office who, prior to joining the Prosecutor's Office, was a member of the Plainfield Police Division. Captain Grimmer has more than thirty years in law enforcement, first-hand knowledge of how a police department runs, and oversees several investigative units within the Prosecutor's Office. Until Monday, he was one of three members of the Prosecutor's Office on temporary assignment at another municipal department over

which the Prosecutor's Office has also had to exercise supersession authority, though the Chief there remains the Officer in Charge under UCPO oversight. Captain Grimmer's duties elsewhere will be assumed by other members of the UCPO team.

Acting Prosecutor Ruotolo and Chief Patricia Gusmano are also temporarily assigning Detective Nicholas Falcicchio to the Fanwood Police Department. Prior to joining UCPO in 2015, Detective Falcicchio was a member of the Blirstown Police Department, where he temporarily served as an Officer in Charge at times.

Captain Grimmer, with assistance from Detective Falcicchio, will assume control of day-to-day operations of the police force on Monday morning.

"The Prosecutor's Office looks forward to working with Mayor Mahr, the Borough of Fanwood's leadership, residents, and officers, as partners while the Borough makes plans for the future of its police force. Our greatest concern is for the safety of members of the Fanwood community and the police officers who serve and protect them, all of whom deserve professional and respectful leadership in their Police Department, which they will have in Captain Grimmer," said acting Prosecutor Ruotolo in a statement.