



Congratulations to Chief Herb Cooley on the recent announcement of his retirement. Herb was involved in policing for more than 40 years and will be missed by all. As Director and a friend I would like to say thanks for everything Chief!!!

See Press release below

VINTON, VA (February 7, 2011) The Town Council of Vinton has announced the retirement of Police Chief Herbert G. Cooley, effective June 30, 2011.

A native of Grayson County, Cooley came to Vinton in 2000, bringing with him over 35 years of law enforcement service. He is retiring after 11 years of service with the Town - and over 33 years in the state of Virginia. Chief Cooley started his law enforcement career in 1966 as a patrol officer in High Point, N.C., after serving four years in the United States Coast Guard. His career has also included serving as the Chief Deputy for the Wythe County Sheriff's Department and as the Chief of Police for the Town of Pulaski. Chief Cooley is a graduate of the FBI National Academy and holds a bachelor's degree from Guilford College and a master's degree from Virginia Commonwealth University in Criminal Justice Administration.

Among his accomplishments, Cooley led the Vinton Police Department in attaining State Accreditation which contributed to the advancement of the department's standards, professionalism, and training. Also, the Vinton Neighborhood Watch program developed and continues to make a positive impact on the quality of life for Vinton residents. The police department initiated a business blitz program to increase safety awareness and build stronger relationships with town businesses. Additionally, Cooley oversaw the merging of the Vinton and Roanoke County 911 Emergency Operations Center, improving services to citizens, while saving money over the long run. He was instrumental in creating the Vinton Citizens Police Academy, a partnership developed with the Vinton Area Chamber of Commerce.

Mayor Brad Grose stated, "On behalf of the entire Town Council, I would like to thank Chief Cooley for his eleven years of devoted service as Chief of Police in the Town of Vinton. During

his tenure, Chief Cooley elevated the level of professionalism in our police department, established respect for our department with other police agencies in the valley as well as with our citizens, and increased police department interaction within our community. It has truly been a pleasure to work with Chief Cooley. The Vinton Town Council wishes to congratulate him upon completion of a highly successful career and extends best wishes for a well deserved retirement." "The level of professionalism Chief Cooley brings to the table is remarkable. He has been a real asset to the town. The police force and the community have benefited tremendously from the Chiefs pro-active and progressive policing styles. We wish him the very best in his retirement." said Town Manager Christopher S. Lawrence.

Reflecting on more than four decades in law enforcement, Chief Cooley smiled and quoted, "If you do what you love, you never work a day in your life". The Chief said that he truly enjoyed his time in Vinton - which he had initially thought would be only three to five years. Eleven years later, he still finds the job challenging and rewarding. However, he acknowledges that after a long career, he is pleased to have the opportunity to spend additional time with his wife, Rhonda, and children Zach and Tara.

In the interim, the department will be led by Captain Benjamin Cook who will be appointed Acting Police Chief until the recruitment process is complete. Cook has served on Vinton's police force since 2001. He previously worked for both the Sheriff's Department and Department of Public Safety in Franklin County, as well as in security and law enforcement for Norfolk Southern. Cook has held the positions of police officer, detective, sergeant, lieutenant and captain. In his role as captain, he works closely with Chief Cooley and currently commands the day to day operations of the Vinton Police Department.