

**BRENT LAMBERT**  
*Mayor*

**LARRY SEWELL**  
*Councilmember*

**EDDIE PHILLIPS**  
*Interim City Manager*



**JIM BETHUNE**  
*Vice Mayor*

**MARC GRAVITT**  
*Councilmember*

**DENNY MANNING**  
*Councilmember*

## City of East Ridge, Tennessee

### Chief Eddie Phillips Announces His Retirement From The City of East Ridge

It is with mixed emotions that I announce my retirement from the City of East Ridge. I have served the citizens of East Ridge for 20 years, first as Fire Chief and the last 12 years as Public Safety Director. I've also served six different times as Interim City Manager. I have been praying about this decision for quite some time and knew that the Lord would give me peace about it when the time was right. My last day of work will be August 2, 2013. While I intend to stay active in public safety issues, I also have the chance to work with my son. Every father understands that's an opportunity you can't easily pass up.

I am very proud of the many accomplishments that have been made in public safety during my tenure as chief. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of many great employees and volunteers, we have seen tremendous improvements in services to our citizens.

Just a few of the accomplishments in the four divisions of public safety include:

#### Police:

- ∞ Reduced the city's crime rate 23% in the last five years!
- ∞ One of the first police departments in the state to be accepted into the state accreditation program.
- ∞ Started full time crime prevention officer for the first time in the city's history.
- ∞ Established unmarked tactical crime suppression patrol for the first time in the city's history.
- ∞ Enhanced response times citywide averaging 2-4 minutes to emergencies.
- ∞ Established Master Patrol Officer and Corporal Promotion programs.
- ∞ Obtained TASERS for 100% of patrol officers.
- ∞ Obtained spike stick tire deflation devices for 100% of patrol officers.
- ∞ Obtained in-car video cameras for 100% of front line patrol officers.
- ∞ Increased the reserve officer program by 50%.
- ∞ Obtained free SWAT vehicles from the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Navy, and a Brinks armored car.

### Fire-Rescue:

- ∞ Achieved an ISO Class 3 rating. This ranks East Ridge in the top 4% of all fire departments nationwide.
- ∞ Won the National Life Safety Achievement Award more times than any other fire department in Tennessee.
- ∞ Maintain a 4 minute average response time citywide.

### Code Enforcement:

- ∞ Established a neighborhood services program to enhance property maintenance initiatives citywide.
- ∞ First city and code enforcement department in the state to use an administrative hearing officer program to better address and enforce property code violations.

### Animal Services:

- ∞ Established state certified animal shelter for the first time in city history.
- ∞ National certified animal control officers for the first time in city history.
- ∞ Established first municipal no kill shelter in the State of Tennessee.

In addition to all of this, we have saved East Ridge taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars by obtaining federal and state grants to provide critical life saving public safety equipment and training.

As you can see, during my tenure as chief, the members of the public safety department have worked very hard to achieve a number of “firsts” and to really improve services to our citizens. I’m very proud of them and their many accomplishments!

As I retire, I have complete confidence in Assistant Deputy City Manager Freida Wheeler to assume the duties of Interim City Manager until the city council can hire a permanent one.

Even though the public safety department has proven successful over the last 12 years, the city council will have to decide if they want another public safety director or return to separate fire and police chiefs as we had 12 years ago. My hope and prayer is that as the city council makes that decision, they will truly act in the best interest of the citizens of East Ridge and also protect the city’s valuable employees.

I also pray that the city manager will appoint a director or chiefs who are professional, qualified, and dedicated to leading public safety forward not backward... the hardworking, dedicated members of our police, fire-rescue, code enforcement, and animal services deserve nothing less!

God Bless the City of East Ridge!