

TO: City Council  
FROM: Michelle Sutherland, Administrative Services Director  
DATE: June 2, 2026  
SUBJECT: Police Chief Confirmation

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1) Recommended Action:

Confirm the appointment of Carlos Quiles to the position of Police Chief and authorize the Mayor to sign an employment agreement with Chief Quiles.

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2) Background:

Current Acting Police Chief Carlos Quiles has demonstrated exceptional leadership, operational expertise, and a strong commitment to both the Tumwater Police Department and the Tumwater community. He is highly respected by department employees, City staff, law enforcement partners, and community members, and has consistently demonstrated the ability to lead effectively through both daily operations and complex organizational challenges. Appointing Acting Chief Quiles as Police Chief would provide stability, continuity, and trusted leadership for the organization and the City as a whole.

Acting Chief Quiles brings more than 24½ years of law enforcement experience, including 15 years of SWAT service, reflecting a long-standing commitment to public safety, operational excellence, and collaborative policing. He was promoted to Lieutenant in 2008 and advanced to Deputy Chief on October 1, 2025. On January 3, 2026, he assumed the role of Acting Police Chief.

Since assuming this leadership position, Acting Chief Quiles has focused on fostering a culture grounded in professionalism, accountability, and selfless service, while strengthening both internal team cohesion and community engagement. He assumed command during a period of significant staffing and operational challenges, including multiple police officer vacancies and the departure of the Police Administrative Manager, which created considerable strain on departmental operations and administrative capacity.

Despite these challenges, Acting Chief Quiles has demonstrated strong leadership and achieved measurable progress across several key operational and organizational priorities.

One of the department's most significant accomplishments under his leadership was the successful implementation of the Body-Worn Camera (BWC) Program. Acting Chief Quiles led the deployment of the program within seven months, significantly accelerating implementation from the original projected timeline of approximately two years. This effort enhanced officer accountability, transparency, and evidentiary capabilities while improving public trust and operational efficiency.

Acting Chief Quiles has also made substantial progress in recruitment and staffing. Under his leadership, the department hired three new police officers, with two additional candidates currently progressing through background investigations, reducing sworn officer vacancies to three positions. He also successfully recruited and hired a Police Administrative Manager, restoring critical administrative leadership capacity. In addition, he developed, secured approval for, and hired a Police Executive Assistant position, enhancing executive-level support and improving overall departmental efficiency.

To better position the department for long-term success, Acting Chief Quiles conducted a reorganization designed to align departmental structure, operational responsibilities, and supervisory functions with the agency's forward-looking vision and strategic priorities. These efforts have improved operational coordination, clarified leadership responsibilities, and strengthened organizational resilience.

Acting Chief Quiles has also prioritized community engagement and transparency. Under his leadership, the department significantly expanded its social media presence and public communication efforts, increasing accessibility, transparency, and community awareness. He additionally commissioned and launched a professional recruitment video that has enhanced departmental visibility and generated increased interest from both lateral and certified officer applicants.

In the area of labor relations, Acting Chief Quiles has worked collaboratively with the police union to strengthen communication, build trust, and foster a partnership-oriented working relationship grounded in mutual respect and shared organizational goals.

Based on his demonstrated leadership, operational accomplishments, commitment to organizational improvement, and dedication to serving the Tumwater community, staff recommends the appointment of Acting Police Chief Carlos Quiles to the position of Police Chief.

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3) Policy Support:

City of Tumwater Mission, Vision, Values

The recommendations support the council priority of "Tumwater Excellence" to refine and sustain a great organization.

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4) Alternatives:

Maintain current TPD structure, complete external search for Police Chief.

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5) Fiscal Notes:

Salary provided by General fund balance.