

# E. Winston residents hear from new chief

BY LAYLA GARMS  
THE CHRONICLE

Residents of East Winston officially welcomed Winston-Salem Police Chief Barry Rountree to their neck of the woods last Thursday, just weeks after he was sworn in as the city's first black male chief.

Rountree met with just over a dozen residents at the Fourteenth Street Recreation Center. The meeting was hosted by the East/Northeast Winston Neighborhood Association. Rountree, a 25-year veteran of the Winston-Salem Police Department, was selected from a nationwide search, beating out two other finalists from Charlotte and Greensboro.

"We are extremely excited about having another African American chief," said Marva Reid, the longtime president of the E/NEWNA. "We were like on the edge of our seats (during the city's final selection process) wondering if we were going to have the one from Greensboro or Charlotte. We wanted somebody who knows us, because we are going through some tumultuous times here in Winston-Salem."

Rountree was delayed by another meeting, so Captain Scott Bricker opened the meeting. Bricker, who has served the WSPD for 23 years, oversees the Police Department's District 2, which encompasses "everything east of 52," the UNC Chapel Hill alumnus explained. Bricker served as a patrol officer in the East Winston community early on in his career, and says conditions have improved in the area.

"Things have changed, and I think from my perspective, things have changed for the better," said Bricker, who has led the division for just over a year. "That does not mean that we're content as a police department, but that's the reason why we need to come out and have these meetings. We want to work with the commu-



Attendees greet Chief Barry Rountree.

Photos by Layla Garms



Marva Reid welcomes the new police chief.



Capt. Scott Bricker addresses meeting attendees.

nity. We want the feedback of the community."

Some of the community members in attendance echoed Bricker's sentiments.

"I really don't have no complaints ... but I can remember a time when I had a lot of complaints," one resident said, noting that the problems he sees in his community have gone from large to small. "I'm giving the Winston-Salem Police Department credit for what they have done over in our area."

Residents voiced a variety of concerns, from speeding in their communities to the plight of young African American males, who are often over-represented in the criminal justice system. Rountree told the

group that the department is currently working on a strategic plan that will help it address the city's most pressing issues, and asked for their input.

"The community input, that's how we're going to shape our plan," he said. Community input is also vital in helping the police solve - and prevent - crimes, Rountree said. He cited the recent arrest of three suspects

on Hattie Ave. as an example of what can happen when residents and the police work together to achieve a common goal.

"What made it possible was a young man and his father saw something suspicious and called the police," Rountree said. "That's how we solve crime. We can't be everywhere; it's almost impossible for us to solve things on our own. That's why we need the community."

Reid, who has led the neighborhood association since 2005, said she feels members of the black community will be more likely to report crimes to the department under Rountree's leadership.

"I think he can help the department deal with the community better," said Reid, who served a congratulatory cake she ordered in honor of Rountree after the meeting. "I think the community will reach out to the department better. There are a lot of crimes that go unreported because we feel uncomfortable."

Rountree told attendees that improving police-community relations is one of his chief priorities as the department's new leader.

"I'm committed to building a better relationship between the police and the community," he said. "I think right now we have the support ... what I'm trying to do is build on that and make it better."

Not surprisingly, crime prevention and safety also top Rountree's list.

"We have seen crime go down in the city for the last two years," he noted. "We want that to continue."

Residents peppered Rountree with inquiries about his plans for community involvement, from the successful Police vs. Community pickup basketball games, (which Rountree said will continue), to Chat with the Chief, a community-based initiative created by his predecessor, Scott Cunningham.

"I'm open to doing it, if that is what the citizens would like me to do," he said.

Charlotte native Spencer Thompson says he is reserving judgement on the merits of the new chief for now.

Thompson, a bail bondsman and Winston-Salem State University alumnus, said the city has seen a pattern of police chiefs who come in with big ideas but cut their tenures short. Thompson said a good chief will stay in it for the long haul, and work hard to maintain his ties to the community over time.

"It's almost like constantly proving yourself. You can't do it (meet with residents) one time and then say that's it. You have to continue to improve the community, and it's not just the police," the 31 year-old observed. "The community has to help out also. It has to be both sides of the table. It definitely has to be a collective effort."



Thompson

## CV&H

from page A1

tions are always vast since the Tarheel State is home to the most craft beer breweries in the South and more than 100 wineries.

"There's nothing like this in the state; we lay claim to being the first in the state," said CV&H Owner Christopher Megginson about his concept of exclusively carrying North Carolina beer and wine.

Megginson, who formerly worked in both real estate and social work, is a longtime wine and beer enthusiast, who, through his travels throughout the state, has gotten to know the owners of wineries and breweries. These relationships gave birth to the concept for CV&H, which opened in October.

Megginson is all about touting area companies and people. His desire to offer customers a unique experience extends to the charcuterie (cured meat) and cheeses that are provided by local vendors and offered to CV&H-goers as "perfect complements" to their beer or wine. Every Saturday, the CV&H Quartet, made up of local musicians, play live music.

"We're welcoming everyone who can appreciate what this state has to offer, whether it be the local musical scene or if it's the farms, the creameries, the breweries or the wineries," said Megginson. "We just want to give it a stage, and showcase what we have to offer."

CV&H is located near the Gateway YWCA, Old Salem Museum and Gardens, Salem College and the UNC School of the Arts in The Summit at Gateway, a mixed use building that houses both businesses and condos. It's that "live, work, play" atmosphere that drew Megginson to the location.

He's created a classy, upscale space, where



Photos by Todd Luck

A view of the interior lounge (above) and exterior patio (below).



much of the furnishings was created with 200-year-old American chestnut wood. In fact, wood is a constant theme there. The host/hostess podium was crafted from a tree trunk, while the former base of a massive tree supports a large glass-top table surrounded by leather love seats and plush chairs. CV&H also boasts a 1,000-square-foot outdoor patio.

Among the lounge's many high-tech features is a tasting room with a monitor that allows customers to connect live to the winery that produced the drink they are enjoying; a self-pay wine station that is always stocked with four white wines and four reds; and the state's only licensed beer wall that lets customers pour their own drafts.

Megginson doesn't want casual beer and wine lovers to be overwhelmed by CV&H. He says it's for customers with all levels of beer and wine experience and those with more generic palates. Aside from the

cheese and charcuterie, a number of "fun complements" are available like panini sandwiches, marinated veggies, smoked salmon bites, jam and various other spreads. CV&H's menu is also customer-friendly, describing how each wine and beer tastes, how it is made and where it was made.

"Some folks initially think you got to know a lot about the beer or you got to know a lot about the wine, and that was the whole sole purpose of creating the menu - so everything is self explanatory," Megginson said.

CV&H is open to the public four days a week - Thursday through Sunday - allowing Megginson and his staff time to personally pick up the wine, beer and other products from around the state. The lounge also hosts private events.

CV&H's small staff includes Megginson's brother, Mike Robinson, who serves as operations manager. Robinson, a

recent UNC Pembroke graduate, said while the lounge offers the type of experience you'd expect in a larger more metropolitan area, it's a welcoming, relaxed environment with no dress code. He said once new customers get the tour of all there is to offer, they love it.

"It has a modern but classic feel," he said. "Obviously, being all local stuff, it's really exciting to people in the community when they come out. It's definitely something different that they haven't experienced before in this area."

CV&H is located at 1111 South Marshall Street, Suite 184. Its normal hours are Thursday and Friday from 4 p.m.-11 p.m., Saturday from 4 p.m.-12 a.m. and Sunday from 2 p.m.-10 p.m. During the National Black Theatre Festival it will have extended hours today (Thursday) through Saturday, with live music each night, a dessert bar and no cover charge.

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