

# Raleigh fire department makes its pitch for diversity

By Cynthia Dean  
THE TRIANGLE TRIBUNE

RALEIGH — The Raleigh Fire Department is responding to complaints about the lack of diversity and its hiring practices head on. Last week, the Raleigh City Council approved the fire department's new plan to hire more women and minorities. Since 2003, the city has hired 83 new firefighters - 13 are African American - but none are black women. The face of the department will change if the new plan works.

John McGrath, the department's new fire chief, presented the plan, which offers several different avenues the fire department will take to make the agency more reflective of the community it serves.

According to a press release from the city of Raleigh, the department will hold open house sessions on the weekends at fire stations in or near neighborhoods that have larger African-American and Latino populations. Members of the fire department's recruiting team will be on hand to pass out information about the agency and answer questions about employment opportunities. They will also help potential recruits fill out their applications.

The plan also calls for making applications available at all 26 fire stations throughout the city. Vacant firefighter jobs and other positions will be posted on flyers that will be posted in other places in the community, such as barber shops, hair salons, libraries, churches and community centers.

The department also plans to start an extensive advertising campaign on local radio stations and in newspapers. In addition, it will work more closely with area colleges and universities, including Shaw University and Saint Augustine's College, in developing strategic recruiting partnerships.

Keith Sutton, president of the Triangle

Urban League, is hopeful that the plan will successfully attract more African Americans and women to the department.

"They have some good ideas and some good strategies, but there are still some other things that could have been done," he said, explaining that the plan does not give enough specifics in some areas.

Sutton said the plan should include a mentoring program to help retain more black firefighters.

"Sometimes there might only be one black firefighter in a station, and he might feel isolated," he said.

Controversy about the department's hiring practices started in January after McGrath was hired over longtime fire department employee Larry Stanford. Stanford is black and has been with the department for more than 25 years. McGrath, who is white, was hired from another state.

After being passed over, Stanford wrote a letter to Raleigh City Manager Russell Allen who is in charge of hiring for all city employees. Representatives of local organizations, including the Triangle Urban League, the Raleigh-Wake NAACP and the Raleigh/Wake Citizens Association, publicly supported Stanford and also visited city officials to get changes made in the fire department.

Marshall Harvey, former president of the RWCA, said the plan is at least a beginning.

"I think it's a good beginning to get diversity in the department, but what took so long?" he asked. "Now it is time to put us in more responsible positions. It's all right if we graduate up to drive, but we want more administrative positions. Reports will be presented to the city council and the general public following each recruitment class. McGrath's first progress report on minority recruitment is due in September.

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Thursday	Thu. night	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
Sun and clouds	A shower possible	Partly sunny	Partly sunny	Increasing clouds	A chance for showers	Cloudy with rain possible	Times of clouds and sun
62°	40°	58° / 31°	54° / 31°	54° / 31°	60° / 31°	57° / 31°	57° / 31°
RealFeel 62°	RealFeel 40°	RealFeel 58°	RealFeel 54°	RealFeel 54°	RealFeel 60°	RealFeel 57°	RealFeel 57°

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**WEATHER TRENDS THIS WEEK**

#### Temperatures

#### Precipitation

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**IN THE SKY**

Sun	Rise	Set	Moon	Rise	Set	Moon Phases
Thursday	6:34 a.m.	6:32 p.m.	Thursday	8:20 p.m.	7:17 a.m.	Full
Friday	6:32 a.m.	6:33 p.m.	Friday	9:19 p.m.	7:40 a.m.	Last
Saturday	6:31 a.m.	6:34 p.m.	Saturday	10:21 p.m.	8:07 a.m.	New
Sunday	6:29 a.m.	6:34 p.m.	Sunday	11:25 p.m.	8:37 a.m.	First
Monday	6:26 a.m.	6:35 p.m.	Monday	12:14 a.m.	9:14 a.m.	
Tuesday	6:26 a.m.	6:36 p.m.	Tuesday	12:30 a.m.	9:59 a.m.	
Wednesday	6:25 a.m.	6:37 p.m.	Wednesday	1:34 a.m.	10:53 a.m.	

**REGIONAL CITIES**

City	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Albany, SC	65 40 pc	69 33 pc	62 31 pc	61 35 r	Memphis, TN	61 40 c	63 36 s	65 39 c
Augusta, GA	70 43 pc	68 36 pc	63 38 pc	60 42 r	Myrtle Beach, SC	65 45 pc	65 35 pc	69 37 pc
Charleston, SC	69 46 pc	69 40 pc	62 38 pc	63 44 pc	Norfolk, VA	58 39 s	49 31 r	48 33 s
Columbia, SC	69 41 pc	68 34 pc	63 35 pc	63 42 r	Raleigh, NC	66 42 pc	60 33 pc	64 31 pc
Durham, NC	63 40 pc	60 31 pc	56 29 pc	62 37 s	Richmond, VA	60 35 pc	52 28 r	61 25 s
Greensboro, NC	60 40	58 29 pc	54 33 pc	57 37 s	Roanoke, VA	59 39 pc	48 30 r	48 30 s
Greenville, SC	68 39 pc	61 34 pc	59 34 pc	60 38 r	Savannah, GA	70 44 pc	73 37 pc	65 36 pc
Knoxville, TN	58 38 pc	52 33 pc	54 32 pc	54 37 pc	Wilmington, NC	65 48 pc	68 34 pc	69 36 pc
Lynchburg, VA	58 36 pc	51 24 r	48 28 s	52 30 s	Winston-Salem, NC	66 40 pc	56 33 pc	54 33 pc

**U.S. CITIES**

City	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Atlanta	63 42 r	62 36 pc	61 39 pc	58 42 r	Miami	80 70 pc	83 66 pc	80 66 pc
Boston	42 30 s	38 28 c	36 26 s	34 29 s	Minneapolis	27 11 sf	28 15 pc	30 20 pc
Chicago	38 20 pc	36 17 pc	38 22 pc	40 26 pc	New Orleans	74 58 r	70 54 r	68 57 r
Cleveland	39 22 sf	35 22 sf	35 23 sf	35 27 s	New York City	45 33 pc	37 25 sn	39 30 s
Dallas	74 44 pc	64 44 pc	56 46 r	60 47 r	Orlando	80 59 pc	80 60 pc	76 56 pc
Denver	49 24 pc	54 27 pc	54 26 c	42 20 c	Pittsburgh	44 28 r	38 22 sn	39 20 pc
Detroit	36 21 sn	36 20 pc	36 23 pc	46 27 pc	Phoenix	79 52 pc	76 53 pc	70 48 c
Houston	78 62 r	70 55 pc	70 58 r	76 80 r	San Francisco	59 47 r	57 42 pc	57 44 pc
Kansas City	59 25 pc	48 25 pc	46 27 sn	45 27 c	Seattle	50 38 r	48 34 sh	48 34 pc
Los Angeles	65 62 pc	62 48 r	60 44 sh	62 46 c	Washington, DC	54 36 pc	48 30 r	45 30 s

**WORLD CITIES**

City	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Amsterdam	39 32 pc	41 34 c	43 36 pc	41 34 pc	Paris	41 29 pc	41 25 pc	45 32 pc
Berlin	52 25 sf	48 25 c	34 27 pc	34 21 pc	Rio de Janeiro	86 75 pc	85 74 pc	88 74 pc
Buenos Aires	79 64 r	77 64 r	75 65 s	76 67 s	Rome	59 39 c	54 33 pc	55 41 pc
Cairo	73 56 s	74 54 s	74 61 s	63 59 s	San Juan	85 72 s	85 72 pc	85 72 pc
Jerusalem	58 43 s	56 45 s	56 46 s	70 49 s	Seoul	57 32 r	60 37 s	49 31 pc
Johannesburg	74 56 c	71 55 r	66 55 sh	71 56 pc	Sydney	86 68 pc	81 64 s	75 66 pc
London	39 30 sn	39 32 pc	41 32 pc	43 34 pc	Tokyo	53 47 r	59 44 pc	57 50 pc
Mexico City	77 48 pc	77 44 r	75 43 s	75 43 c	Toronto	34 20 pc	36 18 c	32 18 pc
Moscow	29 14 c	27 12 pc	28 21 c	31 17 sn	Zurich	40 26 sf	43 28 pc	44 27 pc

Weather (W) = mainly pc-partly cloudy, c cloudy, sh-showers, r thunderstorms, rsn, sf-snow flurries, sfpc-snow, hpc

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