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Burleson City Manager set to retire

Dale Cheatham who has been with the city since March 2012 plans to say goodbye in February 2019.

Under his leadership, the city has seen its credit rating upgraded, joined an elite group of only 270 municipalities in the United States with an Insurance Services Office (ISO) Class 1 rating, opened a new police headquarters and municipal court and experienced year-after-year business growth in the city's industrial park. Dale Cheatham took over as the city manager of Burleson in 2012 and will wrap up his 30-year government career in February 2019.

"Dale is among the most effective and honorable people with whom I've had the opportunity to work," stated Mayor Ken Shetter. "He has been incredibly effective at turning the Council's vision into reality. During his tenure the growth of the city has been well managed, made wise investments in transportation, public works and public safety, seen unprecedented economic development and the city's bond ratings have reflected outstanding financial stewardship. Finally, Dale has been accountable and even-handed with Council members, city staff and citizens. He has made a point to develop talent and empower staff. I am certain Burleson is a better city today because of Dale's leadership."

"I have enjoyed my career here in Burleson tremendously," Cheatham said. "I can't say enough good things about the city council and staff I have had the pleasure to work alongside. I am very proud of the team that we have created and I appreciate the council allowing me the opportunity to lead the city for almost seven years."

Cheatham will be leaving Burleson to spend more time with his family. His oldest daughter, Beth, will be a senior and his son, Josh, will be entering high school in the fall of 2019.

"My career in public service would not have been possible without the support from my wife, DeeAnn, who has taken all the late night meetings and middle of the night phone calls throughout the years in stride," says Cheatham. "Having the opportunity to retire now allows me to be present for my children during their high school years."

City Council has hired GovHR, a public management consulting firm, to head up the search for Burleson's next city manager. The city council hopes to have a new city manager on-board once Cheatham retires.

"The City Council is committed to an exhaustive search to ensure the long history of outstanding management of the City continues," expressed Mayor Shetter. "We are particularly confident in working with the same consultant and replicating much of the process that ended with Dale's hiring in 2012."

Burleson is a council-manager form of government which means that the city manager reports directly to City Council but all other city staff, except for the city secretary, city attorney and municipal judge, report to the city manager. The city manager serves at the pleasure of the council which means the city council is in charge of the city manager's employment.

Cheatham said his focus over the next several months would be guiding the City Council and staff through the end of the city's budget process, the transition into the city's new fiscal year and preparing for the city's upcoming Charter Election. Cheatham said he is confident that deputy city managers Paul Cain and Robert Ranc will make his exit and the new city manager's entrance seamless for staff and city council.

Cheatham began his career in local government in 1989 interning for the City of DeKalb, Illinois. In 1991 he accepted a full-time position with the City of Dallas working in their budget department. He went on to work for the finance department at the City of Greenville, Texas, became assistant city manager for the City of Watauga, Texas in 1996 and was quickly promoted to city manager in 1997 where he remained until 2001. He has served as the city manager for the City of the Colony, Texas from 2001 to 2009 and town manager for the Town of Brownsburg, Indiana from 2010 to 2011.

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