

**From:** [Chip Block](#)  
**To:** [Ivelisse Chico-Randazzo](#); [Kathi Cornelius](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: JIC Police Chief  
**Date:** Thursday, May 25, 2023 7:28:18 PM

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File

Chip Block  
Vice Mayor, Jupiter Inlet Colony  
917-923-0056

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Leslie Swensen <lswensen@gmail.com>  
**Date:** April 14, 2023 at 4:27:41 PM EDT  
**To:** Chip Block <blockc@jupiterinletcolony.org>, "Richard D. Busto" <bustod@jupiterinletcolony.org>, anthonyprosser@me.com, M.Rauch@fpl.com, gmedina@tequesta.org  
**Cc:** Dan Comerford <comerfordd@jupiterinletcolony.org>  
**Subject:** JIC Police Chief

Dear Search Committee - thank you for your willingness to serve on this important committee and thank you for proceeding with transparency and a sound process for finding and hiring the best candidate.

I am on record as a promoter of Captain Jim Matthews for this position. I have had many, many interactions with Jim that range from his catching and killing a huge Bufo Toad, to his stopping by to give my dog a treat and a belly rub, to his helping me carry in a trunk full of groceries, to his banishing me from the beach during Covid, to his questioning a Mexican who was spreading mulch on a Sunday (my son-in-law), to his countless calls on a dear family friend in her 90's when she needed help with her technology or to test her driving skills or to just make sure she was doing well.

An experienced police officer might wonder what those services have to do with law enforcement, but I can tell you that in one of the safest municipalities in the country, that is police work at its finest. By helping residents during routine patrols or when responding to calls for assistance, this police officer makes it his business to get to know each and every resident. Imagine how comforting it would be in a true emergency to see the friendly face and hear the reassuring voice of someone you already know and trust.

My fear is that an outsider will deliberately create a distance between police and residents in the name of professionalism. That divide might be useful and maybe necessary in larger, more diversely populated communities where the number and

nature of crimes is much higher, but that is not what we need in Jupiter Inlet Colony. Until we become a crime-ridden hotbed, we need a police force that exhibits everyday kindness and friendliness that fosters confidence and trust and that sets a tone for the neighborhood. Do we want a parked cruiser with a radar gun dolling out tickets or do we want a cruiser with an extended arm waving hello as it rolls by?

JIC is unique in many ways and, for that very reason, our police force should be unique, too. Let's hire officers who are experienced and skilled in fighting major crime, but let's also hire those who will respect the friendly, family-oriented community that we are...and that almost never needs a crime fighter.

In my view, Jim Matthews is the known commodity that already understands the community, knows the residents, and exemplifies what we need - friendly authority. He makes me a better neighbor by making me smile or laugh as he rides by and I, in turn, smile or laugh at the next person I see.

I'm glad you will look at lots of candidates, but I hope that exploration leads you right back to the strengths we already know in Captain Jim Matthews. I hope you recommend him to the Commission for the position of Chief of Police and I hope the Commission hires him. If not, I hope all residents are made aware of why he wasn't selected. He deserves the position and we deserve the explanation.

Sincerely,  
Leslie Swensen  
234 Shelter