

Few quits Washington fire chief job

Former Augusta Fire Chief Ronnie Few resigned from the District of Columbia's fire department Wednesday morning amid controversy over allegations he lied on his resume and hired former colleagues to fill chiefs positions, for which they were not qualified.

In a statement released Wednesday afternoon, Chief Few said his resignation is effective July 31 - two years after he left Augusta to lead the fire department in the nation's capital.

Washington Mayor Anthony Williams announced earlier in the day that he had accepted Chief Few's resignation but neither condoned nor admonished the move, officials said.

"He was very matter-of-fact about it," said Sharon Gang, the deputy director of communications for the mayor's office.

Letters circulated by the mayor's aides, however, indicated Chief Few sent a letter of resignation May 21 and the mayor accepted it immediately.

The news followed weeks of speculation that Chief Few would resign or be fired after reports in both *The Washington Post* and *The Washington Times* that he had inflated his resume, listing a false award and a college degree he does not have. He said the errors were the result of an Augusta aide and also blamed the errors on the mayor's office.

It's unclear what Chief Few will do once he leaves Washington, but he owns a home in Columbia County, leading some to believe that he could return here to live. Property records show he closed on a \$196,900 house in Farmington subdivision in late December.

"I look forward to my future, and I am committed to making a difference in the lives of others," Chief Few said in the written statement.

Instead of divulging his plans, the three-paragraph news release outlined his successes while in Washington, noting his leadership during the Sept. 11 attacks on the Pentagon and his role in bringing new ambulance and fire equipment to the department.

"I have been a dedicated, passionate and effective District official," he wrote. "(The department) has benefited enormously from my expertise in all areas."

Despite his stated accomplishments, Chief Few's career has been clouded in controversy since he left Augusta in July 2000.

Less than two months after taking the Washington job, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation seized documents from fire administration offices. District Attorney Danny Craig said a special grand jury investigating city government had established probable cause that crimes had been committed by an

employee, or employees, of the fire department.

To date, no indictments have been brought forward, although Mr. Craig has said the grand jury continues to work.

Associated Press reports were used in this article.

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