



## Press Release

Contact: Juli Lozano, City PIO, 541-4010 or 472-1949 (cell)

### *City Manager Announces Fire Chief and Aviation*

**February 20, 2009**-After an extensive process, I am pleased to announce the appointment of Otto Drozd as the next Fire Chief for the City of El Paso. Chief Drozd has over twenty years of fire and emergency service experience, including eight years as the Fire Chief of Hialeah, Florida, a diverse urban city of 250,000 (with a daytime population of 400,000) in South Florida. Chief Drozd competed among five finalists in a two-day panel interview process, and then was interviewed extensively by representatives of the Fire Department, including the Fire Association Board of Directors. He received broad support from the two interview panels, Fire Association board and other staff, as the candidate who best met the present needs of the department in terms of innovation, change and development of the staff of the agency. Chief Drozd graduated from the Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy in 2006. He has a Master of Science in Management from St. Thomas University; a Bachelor of Public Management from Florida Atlantic University, and an Associate of Arts in Business and Associate of Fire Science from Miami Dade Community College. He will take office officially on April 20, but will transition during the upcoming weeks so that he will be prepared to immediately address the challenges awaiting the organization when he officially assumes office.

I am also pleased to announce the appointment of Monica Lombraña as the next Director of Aviation effective March 1, 2009. Monica Lombraña has been employed with the City of El Paso since 1994 and has served at the Aviation Department since 2002 when she was appointed the Airport Operations Manager. Monica has been the Assistant Director since 2005, and the Interim Director since Pat Abeln stepped down in December. Monica competed in a national recruitment process and was one of six finalists - the only internal and local candidate. After an analysis of the applications and telephone interviews with the external candidates by Deputy City Manager Jane Shang, we both concluded that Monica has the most extensive overall experience in all airport management operations and capital programs and deserved the promotion and permanent appointment. We met with the Airport Advisory Board and Airport Department staff on Thursday to discuss our process and selection and received strong support from both groups. Monica was broadly support by retired director, Pat Abeln, as his possible successor. Monica Lombraña has a graduate degree in Business Administration from Webster University and a Bachelor of Science in Management from Park University.

With these appointments, all department head positions are filled so we will enter this budget season and FY 2010 with a strong team to help lead us through the current economic challenges and position us for a stronger organization for the long term.

Since I took office in 2004, I have made 17 executive leadership appointments, all through a national recruitment process. Monica is one of eight City employees promoted to lead city departments since I took office. Of the remaining 9 appointments, three have been local hires from the El Paso community.

Mayor

John F. Cook

City Council

*District 1*

Ann Morgan Lilly

*District 2*

Susannah M. Byrd

*District 3*

Emma Acosta

*District 4*

Melina Castro

*District 5*

Rachel Quintana

*District 6*

Eddie Holguin Jr.

*District 7*

Steve Ortega

*District 8*

Beto O'Rourke

City Manager

Joyce A. Wilson