



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Watertown, CT – March 26, 2026 – Statement from the Town Manager’s Office

It is with profound sadness that the Town of Watertown acknowledges the passing of former Chief of Police and Interim Town Manager, John C. Gavallas.

Chief Gavallas devoted more than five decades of his life to public service, leaving an enduring mark on the Watertown community. Rising through the ranks of the Watertown Police Department—from patrolman in 1969 to Chief of Police in 2007—his career reflected a steadfast commitment to public safety, professionalism, and leadership.

Beyond his distinguished law enforcement career, Chief Gavallas continued to serve the Town in critical ways. In 2020, he answered the call to serve as Interim Town Manager during one of the most challenging periods in recent history, helping guide the community through the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic with steady leadership and institutional knowledge.

Chief Gavallas’ contributions extended well beyond municipal government. His involvement in statewide law enforcement organizations, his commitment to public safety initiatives, and his continued service on local boards and commissions reflect a lifelong dedication to community and civic responsibility.

On a personal level, I had the privilege of working under Chief Gavallas early in my career. His mentorship, leadership, and example had a lasting impact not only on those within the Police Department, but across the broader organization.

On behalf of the Town of Watertown, I extend sincere condolences to the Gavallas family, his colleagues, and all those whose lives were touched by his service. His legacy of dedication, integrity, and commitment to this community will not be forgotten.

Flags at all Town facilities will be lowered to half-staff in his honor and will remain so until the morning following his burial.

Funeral arrangements will be shared when they become available.

For media inquiries and additional information, please contact:

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