



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 23, 2024

I joined the administration of Mayor Clarence Fields over two decades ago because I firmly believed that Pineville was the best City in America. I continue to believe it today. It has been a great honor to serve the citizens of my hometown and to work with the good people of this community who share my commitment to service; notably our City employees, who are the best of the best - our Pineville City Council, and the many, many volunteers who give their time regularly. It is therefore with great sadness that I announce my intention to step down as Mayor, effective October 6th, 2024.

This decision was not made lightly or quickly. A LOT of prayer and deep discussions with those I trust the most, got me here. Many friends and supporters encouraged me to stand firm, even reminding me of the admonishment of Jesus: Let he among you without sin cast the first stone. Believe me, I would take that advice if this unfortunate situation involved only me.

But I cannot in good conscience allow my family, supporters and this administration to endure the cruel reality of mean-spirited politics. Unfortunately, in today's environment, it is not enough to defend the truth and ask for forgiveness. Too often the truth becomes a casualty to rumor and innuendo, especially when propagandized by unaccountable opportunists who stand in the shadows and hurl their stones in anonymity.

In this situation, the price is just too high – and the people being targeted and dragged into the mud, mean way too much to me to allow it to continue – so I must step aside.

While only being Mayor since July 1st, 2022 – what we have accomplished in that short time, is remarkable – and I'm thankful for the opportunity to be a part of something special these last 25-years in City Hall. The deep relationships and friendships made won't end with my resignation – and neither will the projects that we began. But in the end, I love Pineville too much to allow my detractors to disrupt her progress. The good work we started over two decades ago must continue – and it will.

I would not have made this decision without complete confidence in the judgement and intention of the City Council to protect our employees and the progress that is underway.

In the next two weeks, I will be hosting transition meetings with each City Council member, as well as my Senior Staff, to ensure as smooth a transition as possible. May God continue to Bless the Great City of Pineville!!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rich".