

**BOROUGH OF WATCHUNG**

**MINUTES**

**JANUARY 9, 2008, 7:00 P.M.**

**at**

**WATCHUNG HILLS REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**

**MAYOR'S STATEMENT:** Mayor Ellis called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and made the following statement: Under the provisions of N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., notice of the time and place of this meeting was given by way of annual notice to the Courier News, Echoes Sentinel, Messenger-Gazette and Star Ledger, and posted at Borough Hall.

**SALUTE TO THE FLAG and SILENT PRAYER**

**ROLL CALL**

Franklin [ P ] Black [ P ] Mobus [ P ] Joren [ P ] Pote [ P ] Nehls [ P ]

Also present were Laureen Fellin, Administrator/Clerk, Attorney Albert Cruz, Engineer Tom Herits, and Deputy Clerk Michelle DeRocco

There were approximately 250 members of the public present.

**INVOCATION - REVEREND RONALD MILLER**

Reverend Miller, recently retired from Wilson Memorial and longtime Police Department Chaplin, gave an Invocation.

At this time, Mayor Ellis announced that we would deviate from the scheduled agenda and take care of Borough business.

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEES:**

- 1. Administration & Finance - Councilman Nehls had no report this evening.
- 2. Police - Councilman Franklin had no report this evening.
- 3. Public Works - Councilman Mobus had no report this evening.
- 4. Buildings and Public Affairs
  - Buildings - Councilman Pote had no report this evening.
  - Public Affairs - Councilman Nehls had no report this evening.
- 5. Fire - Councilman Black had no report this evening.
- 6. Laws/Ordinances, and Recreation - Councilman Joren had no report this evening.

**REPORTS - OTHER:**

- 7. Engineer - Mr. Herits said he would like to submit the 2008 Community Development Block Grant application for the completion of the handicap accessible restroom at the Watchung Arts Center. It was the consensus of the governing body to approve this application.
- 8. Police Chief - Chief Whelan had no report this evening.
- 9. Attorney - Mr. Cruz had no report this evening.
- 10. Administrator - Mrs. Fellin had no report this evening.

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**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

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**NEW BUSINESS**

**CONSENT AGENDA:** The Consent Agenda listed below was unanimously accepted on roll call following a motion by Councilman Franklin and a second by Councilman Black.

Approval of the following Council minutes:  
November 26, 2007, December 13, and 27, 2007

Approval of the following Borough Reports:  
Building Department - December, 2007  
Richard M. Sasso, JMC - Annual Municipal Court Report

**CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS:** The Consent Agenda listed below was unanimously accepted on roll call following a motion by Councilman Franklin and a second by Councilman Black.

- R1:01/09/08 Authorize Police Department Appointments:  
Sergeant / Kelly, Lorimor  
Lieutenant / Cina, Wenzel
- R2: Authorize Appointment of Police Chief - Sean Whelan
- R3: Authorize Final Payment of Employee Benefits - John Frosoni
- R4: Authorize Change Order #1, Accept Project, and Authorize Final Payment to Janod Contractors / Rock Slope Remediation Project
- R5: Clarification of Appointments / Wildlife Mgt. Comm.and Environmental Comm.
- R6: Authorize Clerk to Advertise for Bids - Beechwood Place Drainage and Curbing Improvements
- R7: Purchases Over \$2,000. - Debco Equipment Cuzco, Inc., Window Tailors, Partner's Equity Capital, Fire & Safety Services
- R8: Authorize Final Payment of Employee Benefits - Veronica Bannon
- R9: Authorize Appointments to Green Brook Flood Control Commission - A. Addario, S. Caruso

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**NON-CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS**

None

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**OATH OF ALLEGIANCE AND OFFICE - SERGEANTS, LIEUTENANTS**

William Kelly, Sergeant

Chief Whelan called forward Detective Bill Kelly and said Bill began his law enforcement career in 1995 as a Somerset County Sheriff's officer, followed by a year as a police officer in Franklin Township in Hunterdon County. He started with the Watchung Police Department in 1997 and was assigned to the Detective Bureau in 2003. Chief Whelan said he is one of the most highly decorated members of the Department. Mayor Ellis administered the Oath of Office to Sergeant Kelly, while his wife Raquel and children Billy and Julia stood by his side.

Daniel Lorimor, Sergeant

Chief Whelan called forward Officer Dan Lorimor and said Dan began his career in Watchung in 1992. He has served as a Department Firearms instructor and a field training officer for 8 years. He said Dan is also assigned as an assistant team leader on the Somerset County Emergency Response team. Dan achieved his Masters Degree in Criminal Justice from New Jersey City University. Mayor Ellis administered the Oath of Office to Sergeant Lorimor, while his wife Elizabeth and sons, Koa and Kai stood by his side.

Joseph Cina, Lieutenant

Chief Whelan called forward Joseph Cina and said Joe began his career with Watchung in 1993. He said he has been assigned as a field training officer, detective, patrol sergeant and administrative sergeant, in addition to serving as the Department's DARE and School Resource officer for 7 years. Joe has a Bachelors degree in Administration of Justice from Rutgers University. Mayor Ellis administered the Oath of Office to Lieutenant Cina, while his wife Fran stood by his side. (New born son Vincent was hopefully asleep at home).

Timothy Wenzel, Lieutenant

Chief Whelan called forward Timothy Wenzel and said Tim began his law enforcement career in the Green Brook Police Department in 1984, and subsequently worked in the Dunellen Police Department and the Somerset County Prosecutors office, leaving there as a lieutenant in charge of the Narcotics Strike Force. Tim came to Watchung in 1994 and has been assigned as a patrolman, a detective, and for the last 9 years as the supervisor of the Criminal Investigations Division. Mayor Ellis administered the Oath of Office to Lieutenant Wenzel, as his wife Patty and children TJ, Kelsey, Casey and Jaime stood by his side.

## **OATH OF ALLEGIANCE AND OFFICE - POLICE CHIEF**

Sean M. Whelan, Police Chief

Councilman Franklin called forward Sean Whelan and said Sean began his career in Watchung as a police aide in 1987. He has served as a patrol officer, detective, detective supervisor, Administrative Supervisor, Patrol Lieutenant, Executive officer and Captain in charge of operations. He has been a DARE Officer, Firearms instructor and Department training officer. Sean recently graduated from the 229<sup>th</sup> session of the FBI National Academy in Quantico. Mayor Ellis administered the Oath of Office to Chief Whelan, as his wife, Sandy and three children Sara, Jenna and Patrick stood by his side.

Chief Whelan thanked all for coming this evening and said this is a tremendous opportunity to thank people who have affected not only his career but his life. He congratulated Timmy, Joe, Danny and Bill, and acknowledged their wives for their support. He thanked Dr. Stromsland and all her staff for the use of facility. He thanked the County Chiefs, especially Russ Leffert and members of Warren Police Dept for coming, and said they have a very special bond between their departments. He thanked the Mayor and Council and referred to them as tireless volunteers who work diligently for the residents of Watchung. He thanked the governing body for the trust they have placed in him and also for the support of his vision for public safety in Watchung, adding that many Chiefs here can attest that it can be a rare thing to have governing officials who take their roles very seriously and are supportive of department goals. Chief Whelan thanked all the employees of the Police Department, from Police aides, administrative staff, police officers and supervisors, saying a prior Chief used to say he was the steward of the ship and not say it was his Department. Chief Whelan said he disagrees with that and said he was proud to say 'I am your Chief and very proud of what you do every day. You should be very proud of the noble work you do'. He acknowledged the service and leadership of those who were here before him, saying they've taught him a lot about being a police officer and a leader. He thanked Bob Reilly, Lloyd Snell, Jeff Roberto, Tim Faust, Jeff Skibenes and Ron Lacaillade. He said he would also like to thank Bruce Egnasko for the many years they've worked together and for his continued loyal service. Chief Whelan said he would like to recognize the person who really runs the Police Department, Mrs. Kathy Davies, saying she is the glue that holds it all together. He thanked his sister who has always been there for him, adding that she was the second mother that he didn't always want but sometimes needed. In regard to his Mom, Sean said she often tells him how proud his father would be if he were here. He looked to her and said, "I hope you are proud as well. There are no words a grown man can say to his mother to thank her for his life... except, I love you Mom". He thanked his children Sara, Jenna and Patrick, and said they are why he does what he does, they are the lights of his life. He said it is very rare that a man gets the opportunity to talk about his wife in such a crowded venue and referred to his earlier comment as to the difficulty of being a police officer's wife. He said, "Can you imagine being married to me? Sandy has been telling me for weeks to recognize my mom and my kids...and all she wanted was for me to admit she is funnier than I am. That is not going to happen". Sean said it is very difficult to talk about what Sandy means to him, and said he wouldn't be him without her. He said all the clichés are true ...behind every good man..., yadda yadda. He said their wedding vows said 'in sickness and health, for richer or poorer, and good times and bad' and said he has put them all to the test. Sean looked to her and said "you've stayed with me...you are my rock...we have a long way to go...thank you for being you". The Chief said he wouldn't be here if it were not for the members of the Watchung Police Department, and said its easy to look good when you have the quality of people that he does working for him. He said he is truly humbled to say that he is the Watchung Police Chief. He said he has been to many swearing-ins where chiefs, colleagues and friends say that they have the best police department, the only problem is... they were wrong. Chief Whelan said we have lived through all the pain and tragedy this job can bring...and will never forget it...but we will continue to move forward with the courage to be better than we've ever been. Quoting Emerson, Chief Whelan said "lets map out our course of action, and follow it to the end... Lets go!"

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**NON-CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS**

None

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**PUBLIC PORTION**

No one from the public desired to be heard.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM to the call of the Chair or the next regularly scheduled meeting of January 24, 2008, at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle DeRocco, RMC  
Deputy Clerk