

It's Chief Medina now

Watsonville police have a new boss

By JENNIFER KOSS
STAFF WRITER

Terry Medina is Watsonville's new police chief.

City Manager John Radin made the announcement at last night's City Council meeting, stepping to the podium during the oral communications portion of the agenda to say, "I made my decision after 2 o'clock this afternoon on the appointment of chief."

After congratulating Medina, Radin handed over the chief's badge and warned the new chief not to make any mistakes for the next 12 months. Medina will have to undergo a year's probation before he secures the job.

Medina was also congratulated with a handshake and applause by several police officers in the audience, including Lt. Mickey Aluffi, the only other chief's applicant from the Watsonville force, who did not make the top five in the selection process.

Also on hand was former police chief Ray Belgard, who retired last month. The 42-year-old Medina had been serving as the city's acting chief since Belgard's retirement.

Belgard told the council he intended to "kind of lay in the shadows a little bit" and reiterated a promise he said he made

at his retirement dinner that "you haven't seen the last of me yet."

A beaming Medina said he intended to maintain the traditions established during Belgard's seven years as chief.

"I feel very proud to have the opportunity to lead such fine men and women as the 67-plus employees in the police department," he said.

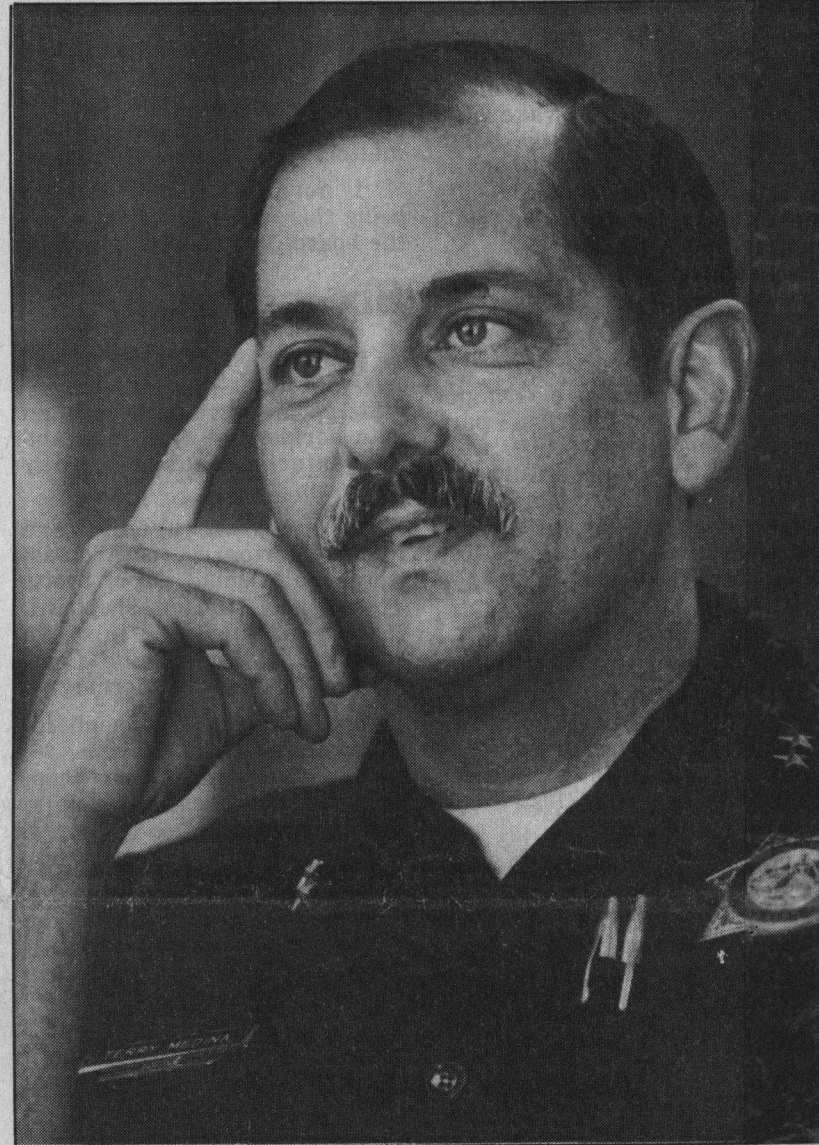
He told the council he hoped to "do you proud," adding, "and I'd like to ask the city manager if I could go to the phone and call my parents."

Medina was promptly excused from the meeting.

Before joining the Watsonville force in 1982, Medina was a sheriff's deputy and an investigator for the Santa Cruz County District Attorney's office.

It was learned yesterday he and Chuck Foster, a chief deputy for the Monterey County Sheriff's Office, were the top two contenders for the chief's position. Foster, 53, grew up in Watsonville, graduated from Watsonville High School and has spent his entire law-enforcement career with the Monterey County Sheriff's Office.

Medina and Foster came out on top of three other candidates in interviews conducted by



Kurt Ellison

Medina said he plans to be police chief for a long time.

three panels consisting of county law-enforcement officials, Watsonville city department heads and Watsonville Police Department administrators.