IN THE MATTER OF RICHARD M. SASSO JUDGE OF THE MUNICIPAL COURT	SUPREME COURT OF NEW JERSEY ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT DOCKET NO. ACJC 2007-162 **STIPULATIONS**

The undersigned Disciplinary Counsel ("Presenter") to the Advisory Committee on Judicial Conduct and Richard M. Sasso ("Respondent"), through counsel, hereby enter into these Stipulations:

1. The parties have no objection to the admittance into evidence of Presenter's exhibits P-1 through P-60 and Respondent's Exhibits R-1 through R-14 at the Formal Hearing scheduled in this matter for November 10, 2008.

2. At all times relevant to these matters, Respondent held the position of Judge of the Municipal Courts of Warren Township, Bridgewater Township, Bound Brook Borough and Watchung Borough. Respondent held these positions on a part-time basis.

3. Effective January 23, 2008, Respondent resigned from his positions as judge of the Municipal Courts of Warren Township, Bridgewater Township, Bound Brook Borough and Watchung Borough.

COUNT I

4. On December 6, 2006, Respondent presided over the evening court session in the Bridgewater Municipal Court while under the influence of prescription medication and/or alcohol. At the end of the court session that evening, Respondent's wife was called to drive Respondent home. The identification of the medications, the dosage prescribed and the

condition for which Respondent was prescribed the medications is set forth more fully in Respondent's medical records, which have been made a part of the record before the Committee.

5. On December 6, 2006, Respondent was scheduled to preside over the evening court session in the Bound Brook Municipal Court, which was to follow the evening court session in the Bridgewater Municipal Court. Due to Respondent's impaired condition, however, the court session in the Bound Brook Municipal Court was canceled.

6. On April 17, 2007, Respondent presided over the court session in the Warren Municipal Court while under the influence of prescription drugs and/or alcohol. Again, due to his impaired condition, Respondent needed to be driven home from court at the end of the court session. The identification of the medications, the dosage prescribed and the condition for which Respondent was prescribed the medications is set forth more fully in Respondent's medical records, which have been made a part of the record before the Committee.

COUNT II

7. On November 29, 2007, Respondent was a patron at Torpedo's Go-Go Bar (the "Establishment") in Bound Brook, New Jersey. While in the Establishment, Respondent identified himself to the bartender as a Bound Brook judge. Respondent was physically removed from the Establishment.

8. In response to a telephone call from the Establishment, the Bound Brook police came to the Establishment and transported both Respondent and his companion to the police station to permit them to make arrangements for a ride home due to their presumed level of intoxication.

9. Once at the Bound Brook Police Station, Respondent called Russell Leffert, the Warren Township Police Chief, for a ride home. Chief Leffert drove Respondent and his companion home from the police station that evening/morning.

COUNT III

10. Respondent imposed sanctions on individuals who appeared before him in municipal court pursuant to Rule 1:2-4.

COUNT IV

11. On July 12, 2007, Respondent presided over the matter of State v. Lisa Brown in the Watchung Borough Municipal Court. Respondent issued a bench warrant for Ms. Brown's arrest when she did not respond to the initial call of her case. Following the call of the list, Ms. Brown advised Respondent that she was present in the courtroom, at which point, Respondent held Ms. Brown in contempt of court and ordered her incarcerated in the Somerset County Jail.

12. Even assuming that Ms. Brown had arrived late to court, Respondent's conduct towards her was discourteous and intemperate, which was improper.

13. On August 8, 2007, Respondent presided over the matter of State v. Sostre in the Bound Brook Municipal Court. The defendant, Ms. Sostre, was represented by Patricia Bombelyn, Esq., who appeared before Respondent that day. Respondent sanctioned Ms. Bombelyn for contempt of court.

14. Ms. Bombelyn filed an appeal of the sanctions which resulted in the sanctions being vacated by the Superior Court.

15. On September 24, 2007, Respondent presided over the matter of State v. Mike Roberson in the Watchung Borough Municipal Court. Mr. Roberson returned to court after Respondent had imposed a fine on Mr. Roberson pursuant to Mr. Roberson's guilty plea. At that

time, Respondent's conduct towards Mr. Roberson was discourteous and intemperate, which was improper.

COUNT V

16. On May 9, 2006, Respondent presided over the matter of State v. Tina Sears in the Warren Township Municipal Court At the end of the court proceedings, Respondent directed his court officer to detain Ms. Sears as she was exiting the courtroom because Ms. Sears cursed at Respondent. Ms. Sears initially denied cursing at Respondent.

17. Respondent held Ms. Sears in contempt of court and sentenced her to immediate incarceration in the Somerset County Jail for ten days.

18. The following day, Respondent released Ms Sears from jail after she apologized to Respondent for her conduct.

19. Respondent abused his contempt powers under Rule 1:10-1 when he held Ms. Sears in contempt of court and immediately imposed a jail sentence on her without issuing a stay of the jail sentence for five days as required by Rule 1:10-1.

20. In State v. Lisa Brown, Respondent abused his contempt powers under Rule 1:10-1 when he held Ms. Brown in contempt of court without issuing the necessary order of contempt and certification, without affording Ms. Brown an immediate opportunity to respond, and without issuing a stay of the sanction for five days as required by Rule 1:10-1.

COUNT VI

21. Respondent imposed lesser fines on high school students charged with motor vehicle violations, referring to those lesser fines as the "Warrior Discount," or other applicable school mascot discount, after consideration of sentencing factors.

COUNT VII

22. Respondent was a member of the Watchung Chemical Fire Company (the "Company") and consulted with the Company from time to time on various matters, including its by-laws, without compensation. Respondent is listed as the Company's "attorney" on Company documents.

CANDACE MOODY, ESQ.
Advisory Committee on Judicial Conduct

DATED: November 7, 2008

ANTHONY B. VIGNUOLO, ESQ.
Attorney for Respondent, Richard M. Sasso

DATED: November 7, 2008