

Elections will bring pay hikes

Written by MARK JAEGER

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New trustees to get bump for meetings; president's raise blocked

Village trustees in Fredonia will be getting pay hikes for attending meetings, following the recommendation of a community survey.

Trustees voted last week to increase the pay for attending Village Board meetings to \$55 and committee meetings to \$25, but balked at a proposal to raise the salary of the village president.

Meeting pay was increased by \$10.

Village officials haven't had their pay adjusted since 2000.

A survey conducted in July showed the community was divided over granting raises, with 52% supporting the idea.

There were 157 responses to the survey, which also sought feedback on a variety of proposed park projects.

Because of the general support for raises, the village checked the pay offered to elected officials in neighboring communities and felt adjustments were warranted.

Starting next spring, the Village of Belgium will boost the pay for trustees to \$60 for board meetings and \$40 for committee meetings. Random Lake will raise its pay for meeting attendance to \$25 in spring.

This year, the village paid 194 meeting claims. If meeting attendance stays the same next year, the hike will cost the village an additional \$1,940.

Although the meeting pay was unanimously approved by trustees, boosting the salary for the village president from \$3,000 to \$4,000 was blocked.

The current pay for area village presidents ranges from \$1,500 in Belgium to \$4,500 in Random Lake.

With two trustees absent, the board was split 2-2 on the president's pay.

That left it up to Village President Chuck Lopicola to cast the deciding vote.

"I believe the president's pay should be tied to meeting attendance," Lopicola said.

After thinking for a moment, he voted against raising the president's salary.

"Let's just keep it the same," Lopicola said.

The per-meeting increase will apply to the president, as well as trustees and appointed citizen

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members.

The hikes will go into place following the April election, when three trustees and the president are elected. Board members whose terms don't expire this year will not be eligible for the meeting pay increase until April 2014.