

Village, police agree on contract

Written by Mark Jaeger

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Union to get series of 1% raises in exchange for cost-saving concessions

Members of the Village of Saukville's police union are on the verge of signing another bare-bones labor contract, acknowledging the difficult financial times the municipality is experiencing.

Last year, the village and its sworn police officers, represented by the Saukville Professional Police Association, Local 317 of the Labor Association of Wisconsin, agreed to a one-year contract that froze wages at their 2009 level.

Last week, the Village Board authorized Village Administrator Dawn Wagner to finalize a two-year contract that is nearly as tight with tax dollars.

Trustees have agreed in principle to give the nine officers represented by the union a series of 1% wage increases in six-month intervals.

The pay hikes will go into effect on Jan. 1 and July 1 of 2011 and 2012.

The contract also shifts health-insurance coverage to a deductible plan offered by the Wisconsin Department of Employee Trust Funds.

Another provision of the contract will require new full-time employees to pay a greater share of the Wisconsin Retirement Fund program starting in January.

In exchange for the concessions made by the union, members will be eligible for two "wage adjustment days." The equivalent of paid days off, they can be used at the discretion of the employee with three days notice.

The additional days off, however, cannot result in overtime pay.

Job security is also a cornerstone of the contract, with the village agreeing there will be no layoff of department members during 2011 or 2012.

The contract expires Dec. 31, 2012.

Wagner said the new contract echoes the favorable relations the village cultivated with the police union last year.

"The membership in LAW took a lead role in working with the village's management and elected officials last year, which was greatly appreciated," Wagner said.

"They understood the economic realities of the village budget and the state and national economy. The same leadership was displayed this year during contract negotiations with moving to the state deductible plan."

Village President Barb Dickmann was equally laudatory of the union and its cooperation in

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hammering out the latest agreement.

“This contract is a continuation of the goodwill exhibited by them during tough economic times and I am very grateful,” Dickmann said.