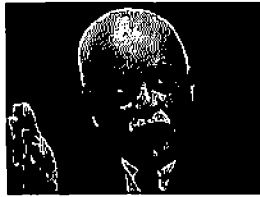


Judge gives union reprieve in battle with Wayne Co.

By Eric D. Lawrence, Detroit Free Press 7:49 p.m. EDT September 11, 2015

Wayne County sheriffs command officers' pay at issue



(Photo: Ryan Garza)

The Warren Evans administration has been halted, at least temporarily, from imposing wage and other changes under Wayne County's consent agreement with the state on union-represented command officers in the Sheriff's Office.

The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Council 25 said it won the reprieve, which would come in the form of a temporary restraining order, during a hearing today in front of Wayne County Circuit Judge John Murphy.

"The move effectively stops ... Wayne County from altering the wages, hours and benefits of employees issued under the new consent agreement with the state," AFSCME Council 25 announced in a news release.



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Evans issues 1st order under consent agreement

[\(http://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/wayne/2015/09/10/evans-issues-1st-order-under-consent-agreement/72032506/\)](http://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/wayne/2015/09/10/evans-issues-1st-order-under-consent-agreement/72032506/)

Zenna Elhasan, Wayne County's director of corporation counsel, promised an appeal.

"We disagree with Judge John Murphy's ruling to grant a temporary restraining order to AFSCME Local 3317 to prevent Wayne County from imposing contract provisions. The county will seek an emergency appeal," Elhasan said in an e-mailed statement.

AFSCME Council 25 President Al Garrett described the court action as a victory "for the moment."

The union represents about 60 command officers and had reached agreement on noneconomic issues last year while Robert Ficano was still county executive, Garrett said, noting that the union was asked to put the agreement on hold by the current administration and had honored the request.



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Wayne County consent agreement ready to go ... almost

[\(http://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/wayne/2015/08/20/consent-agreement-delay/32071887/\)](http://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/wayne/2015/08/20/consent-agreement-delay/32071887/)

"The negotiations with regard to this group had become extremely difficult. ... (The county was) renegeing on issues that had previously been agreed upon," Garrett said.

The union, according to its court filings, had reached agreement on issues including dues check-off, grievance arbitration, promotions, an internal affairs investigations bill of rights and annual leave and shift scheduling.

"The union stands to lose everything, and the county stands to grant itself dictatorial powers over the working conditions of the men and women of the Wayne County Sheriff's Department, employed in the ranks of sergeants, lieutenants and captains," according to the union's court filings.

The document asserts that if the county is not stopped, then political patronage, rather than merit, will be used in determining promotions. The union also disputes the underlying reason the Evans administration gave and Gov. Rick Snyder confirmed for needing a consent agreement, saying the county is not in a financial emergency because it has the authority to levy additional taxes that would raise about \$75 million per year.

In addition to the command officers, the county is continuing to negotiate with most of its unionized workers. The consent agreement, which became effective last month, would eventually allow Evans to impose contract terms on unions with expired contracts, although the union asserts that the command officers have additional protection under the law.

Evans has said he needs the authority of the consent agreement to force employee benefit cuts so the county can right its financial ship. The administration estimates that the county has a structural deficit of tens of millions of dollars and faces a grossly underfunded employee pension system

and heavy health care costs.

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