

Village of Lewiston signs off on new police contract

BY JOSHUA MALONI
GM/Managing Editor

The Lewiston Police Department has a new contract with the Town and Village of Lewiston.

Trustees in the village approved their portion of the deal at Monday's monthly meeting.

Read the contract online at www.wnypapers.com.

Mayor Anne Welch said, "Just so everyone is aware, the police contact has not been updated since, I believe, 1995; so, we've been working with the town to update that police contract and get it revised and updated."

The village's negotiation efforts were led by trustees Nick Conde and Tina Coppins, and counsel Joseph Leone Jr.

"We sat down with the town, which was (Supervisor) Steve Broderick and his team, and (Councilman) John (Jacoby). We



came to an agreement that, from year two to year six, they'll get a 2% increase every year, and the last four years it'll be flat," Coppins said. "We did a 10-year contract with them. We're looking to

start it next July. We're signing it now, but then the new payments start in July.

"The new fiscal year," Welch said.

"We haven't given them an in-

crease in over 12 years, so we came to a tough agreement with them," Coppins said.

"It's overdue; it's been overdue for a long time," Deputy Mayor Vic Eydt said. "At least it spells out what we're going to be doing in the future."

Welch said, "We appreciate our police department. You always do a good job and keep us safe."

Leone said, "There have been drafts of this agreement for the past several years, going back and forth between myself and whoever the town attorney was at the time. (Current counsel) Al Bax and I participated in this, and were able to agree on the terms of the language that we think is fair to both parties - not only dealing with payments, but dealing with insurance; dealing with litigation; dealing with the fact that the town has a collective

bargaining agreement with the police union and we do not. So, we tried to make it as comprehensive as possible, but as easy reading as possible.

"As to the numbers that are in there, the board here, and I think the Town Board ... the members who were part of the committee, all agreed that the numbers that the village will be paying towards its share of the budget are fair and reasonable under all of the circumstances.

"We thought that 10 years was an adequate time. The fact that this hasn't been in place since 1995 didn't make a whole lot of sense to any of the board members, or the council, and we thought that 10 years was a reasonable period of time. And then at the end of 10 years, it can be looked at again."

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Board votes to raise water rate & surcharge to bolster water system, fund account

Eydt notes need for second water line in ability to fight fires

BY JOSHUA MALONI
GM/Managing Editor

Come Jan. 1, water fees in the Village of Lewiston will increase. The board acted Monday to approve local laws raising the water improvements surcharge from \$10 to \$15 per billing cycle, and to up the water rate from \$4.03 to \$4.25 per 100 cubic feet of usage.

As to the first change, "We've had that miscellaneous \$10 surcharge for a while now; it would be raised to the \$15 on water bills. That is to pay for our aging infrastructure; water improvements that we need to do; so, we need funding to do it," Mayor

Anne Welch said.

Deputy Mayor Vic Eydt explained, "Just to give you an example, the work that we did on Ninth Street, tying that in with all the water breaks, that money that we've been collecting for the last couple years paid for a good portion of that (repair). We did get a grant on it, but it didn't cover the whole thing. So, the money that we had set aside doing this enabled us to actually go ahead and do that project. If we hadn't had that \$10, we wouldn't been able to do it for another couple of years, and we would have had to put it abruptly into the budget, which

would have increased our budget.

"It just helps us out, as far as in the future. We were talking about the sewer, but we're also having problems with the water, as far as old systems and breaks, whatnot. For example, on Ninth Street, between Center Street and Mohawk, over a two-year period, we had like 19 breaks - and our cost was about \$3,000, almost, per break. Add that up.

"So, by doing this, you're able to eventually, actually, save money."

Eydt added, "The other thing is, we have this project where we want to bring the other water line in, so we have a second water line coming into the Village of Lewiston - because, right now, we only have one. Coming across from behind Tops, underneath the parkway, over to Walker Drive. We want to be able to bring a second line in from Ridge Road, underneath the parkway, in front of Tops, on Center Street.

"To do that, we've got some money set aside from the grant there, too. It's a matching type of grant, so we have to come up with some of the matching money. This is where it's going to come from. So, we've got to do that so that we're safe; so, the next time

we have a big fire in the village, we're able to fight it. We're not shutting down the entire system.

"A prime example ... when the Brickyard burned (in 2020), that basically sucked every bit of water out of our system for about five hours while they were fighting that fire - and we cranked it up, because we didn't have a second source of water.

"That's why we're doing this."


Welch added, "As Vic said, we received a state grant to do the water line. I think it's \$959,000. A very costly project, so, it'll be over a million dollars. But like Vic said, we'll need some of the village funding to offset it, too. But it is important."

With regard to the water fee, "We need to raise our rates, because we are low in our water (account)," Welch said.

Treasurer Stephanie Longwell said, "Our auditor suggested to raise it to \$4.50, because we have no fund balance in the water fund. Obviously, the board thought that was too high all at once, so we're going to try \$4.25 and revisit it again, if need be."

Trustee Nick Conde noted the village's rate increase is a direct result of the county's fee increase.

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Casa Antica spearheading turkey donation

Casa Antica chef Calogero (Charlie) Soldano and Darius Myles of D Myles Inc. are teaming to provide 120 turkeys to those in need. They will be handing out the holiday bird starting at noon Saturday at the Boys &

Girls Club in Niagara Falls, 725 17th St. Distribution is first-come, first-served, until supplies are gone.

Soldano said those in need of a turkey delivery can contact Casa Antica at 716-754-2581.