



Low priority transfers refused as paramedics picket

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Nash said the employees will be picketing in front of the Essex Civic Centre on Friday and will hold similar

protests until Sun Parlour Emergency Services Inc. agrees to continue contract negotiations.

Operations manager John Jacobs Jr. said so far

no date has been set for another meeting.

"It's just like any other contract negotiations, there are certain demands we can't meet," Jacobs said.

With essentially no reduction in staff or coverage, Jacobs said everything remains status quo.

"If anything, we're in better shape," he said, adding that because employees are not tied up with low-priority transfers, they are more available for emergencies.

Jacobs says that he's hoping for a contract in the near future and to resume full operations.

After Essex County council was criticized last week for refusing to return to negotiations, Warden Nelson Santos said the county is only responsible for setting funding parameters and "is not involved in negotiations whatsoever."

"That's one of the concerns that continues to come up, that the county is not willing to negotiate, but it's not our job to do that," Santos said. "We've given those (funding) parameters to Sun Parlour and they're working as the employer to negotiate a deal for what's best in their interest, as well as try and accommodate the requests from their paramedics."

Paramedics from Sun Parlour Ambulance walk the picket line in front of the Leamington station March 23, led by Shawn Arrand, union steward, left, and Ian Nash, chief union steward, both with the Service Employees International Union - Local 1.0N.

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More affordable housing needed

As a proud member of the Orchard Park Co-op here in Essex, my family and I have been part of this wonderful community. Some day though we would like to purchase a home in Essex, either new or pre-lived in.

Well with current trends going on, especially good paying jobs like the auto industry, you would think that perhaps the market for new homes would be, say, more affordable.

I recently looked into some of these new homes but \$180,000 for a two bedroom townhome I think is a bit on the ridiculous side. Perhaps our town, mayor and council should look into more affordable solutions.

Yes, we love being a part of the Orchard Park community but you can't tell me that homes in Essex are cheap.

Terry Ozard
Essex

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