

# York officers want wage parity with other forces

From page 1

He added, particularly grievous behaviour can be addressed with Criminal Code charges, if the officer judges them to be appropriate.

"If somebody's doing something extremely drastic, (police) can deal with it through the Criminal Code," he said.

"They can still write tickets, it's at their discretion."

Union members are angered at being asked to make concessions on benefits, Mr. Miskiw said.

They are also seeking wage increases, including seniority benefits, that would bring York Region officers up to the level of other forces.

"Our main objective with the current negotiations is benefits first and wage parity with Toronto police and the OPP," Mr. Miskiw said.

"And (the police services board is) not willing to go there."

The two sides were talking until 7 p.m. Monday, when union members gathered to vote on job action.

"They (the board) have made attempts to go into areas that are unacceptable to us at this time," Mr. Miskiw said.

Police services board chairperson Dave Barrow acknowledged the board's effort to "reorganize" benefits packages in current talks.

But he said the board has

offered to meet the union's demands for wage adjustments.

"As far as I'm concerned, the money we offered is the same as Toronto and the OPP... were right there," Mr. Barrow said.

"That represents almost a 4-per-cent increase."

He said the scale of the negotiations have "degenerated" from talks over a multi-year deal to a revised goal of a one-year contract.

"I think everybody's fairly tentative about signing a multi-year deal right now," Mr. Barrow said.

*As far as I'm concerned, the money we offered is the same as Toronto and the OPP... we're right there.*

"They offered us a one-year deal; we countered with a one-year agreement."

Mr. Miskiw agreed the union is determined in these negotiations not to make concessions that would have a negative impact on future contracts.

He vowed to hold firm on the issue of preserving the integrity of the union's benefits package.

"They (the board) have made attempts to go into areas that are unacceptable to us at this time," the union boss said.

The work-to-rule campaign,

being phased in this week, will include measures such as:

- Wearing ball caps and buttons and detectives in casual dress;

- Refusing to work from home;

- Refusing to work during designated lunch breaks;

- Tending to one call at a time, then processing the necessary paperwork, as opposed to attending back-to-back calls, as they often do now; and

- Refusing to write tickets for traffic infractions.

The extraordinary measures are being taken to reinforce the union's position as contract talks drag on, Mr. Miskiw said.

"They (the board) know exactly where we stand," he said.

"Realistically, they don't have to move too much to come to where we want them to be."

One side effect a slowdown in ticket writing will have is in terms of revenue flowing to regional and municipal governments. In return for taking over courts administration, municipalities now receive the fines for Provincial Offences Act charges, such as speeding.

A York Region spokesperson said the municipality collected a total of \$6.2 million for provincial offences fines last year.

In 2002, York cops laid 38,494 speeding charges. They wrote tickets for almost 7,500 other provincial offences.

The current contract dispute marks the second major chal-

lenge mounted by the union since Chief La Barge took office. In May, Mr. Miskiw complained staffing levels are stressing out York cops.

The chief has committed to coming up with a five-year staffing plan that will address

the needs of both the community and the police department. It is expected to be presented to the police services board this fall.

The two sides were scheduled to get back to the bargaining table last night.



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## West Nile virus Public Information Open Houses

Some mosquitoes can carry West Nile virus and bites may lead to West Nile virus infection. For the very few who become infected, most don't even know it. Some, however, will develop West Nile virus illness, including fever, muscle aches, stiff neck, confusion, severe headache, skin rash and sudden sensitivity to light. For a rare few, the virus can lead to serious neurological illness.

**Your role**... Even though the chances of being bitten by an infected mosquito are small, use protection measures to avoid contact with mosquitoes, especially when mosquitoes are most active between dusk and dawn. Also, reduce mosquito breeding grounds around your home.

**Our role**... York Region is working hard to prevent West Nile virus in our community. Our West Nile virus control strategy includes: extensive public education; monitoring of the human, bird and mosquito populations for the virus, and mosquito control activities, with phase two of the Region-wide larviciding plan now underway, using *methoprene* to prevent mosquito larvae from reaching maturity.

**We are ready**... Our goal is to protect your health. The York Region West Nile virus control strategy also includes the option to use *malathion* to control the adult mosquito population and reduce the risk of exposure to West Nile virus. The decision would be made by the local Medical Officer of Health, based on a local risk assessment. *Malathion* has been approved for this purpose by both the provincial and federal governments.

As with any contingency plan, it is possible that the decision to use *malathion* this year may not need to be made. If it is necessary, however, York Region is ready.

**We want you to be, too**... Do you have health-related concerns about West Nile virus or the use of *malathion*? Do you suffer from environmental sensitivities? We want to address your questions and concerns.

Please join us... York Region Health Services is offering this second series of public information open houses in all nine area municipalities. Drop in anytime between 7:00 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. on these dates.

Dates	Locations
Monday July 14	Town of Markham Civic Centre - Council Chambers 101 Town Centre Boulevard, Markham
Tuesday July 15	Town of East Gwillimbury Civic Centre - Council Chambers 19000 Leslie Street, Sharon
Wednesday July 16	Town of Georgina Civic Centre - Council Chambers 26557 Civic Centre Road, Keswick
Thursday July 17	Town of Newmarket Municipal Offices - Council Chambers 395 Mulock Drive, Newmarket
Monday July 21	Town of Aurora Town Hall - Council Chambers 100 John West Way, Aurora
Tuesday July 22	City of Vaughan Civic Centre - Council Chambers 2141 Major Mackenzie Drive, Vaughan
Wednesday July 23	Town of Richmond Hill Town Offices - Council Chambers 225 East Beaver Creek Road, Richmond Hill
Thursday July 24	Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Town Offices - Council Chambers 37 Sandiford Drive, 4th Floor, Stouffville
Tuesday July 29	Township of King Municipal Offices - Council Chambers 2075 King Road, King City

For more information call 1-800-361-5653  
or visit [www.region.york.on.ca](http://www.region.york.on.ca)