

Letters to the Editor

County not bargaining with unit in good faith

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Deputy County Executive Larry Schwartz refers to our "irresponsible and immature" declaration of war ("Contract battle spills into public," Sept. 1 story). We have been battling with the designated negotiator for more than 24 months, and have had obstacles and delays for 20 months. It is a war when the prices go up, as well as our taxes, and our salaries are stagnant for two years.

Schwartz states we should be "negotiating around the clock to reach a settlement." This misrepresents that we have not made any effort, when the opposite has taken place. Every offer/counter-offer we have brought to the table was flatly rejected, if they decided to meet with us at all. Coming to a meeting with nothing to offer, with no counter-offer, is not negotiating in good faith, which is where Unit 9200 has been since before Dec. 31, 2001. Schwartz states we are "threatening legislators up for re-election" and "putting up misleading information." We are tired of supporting legislators and other elected officials and getting little support back. We only wish to assure them that we are well aware of who has supported us in the past and who will continue to support us. The legislators are in a position to support us and know what they can, and must, do to help the dedicated Westchester County employees. We are residents and taxpayers and are still trying to survive on our 2001 salary. This did not start out as a battle; unfortunately, the county's negative response to our requests to meet and negotiate in good faith has escalated our position.

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