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## Preliminary settlement with city reached

By Andrés Serna  
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A preliminary settlement has been reached in an 11-year-old class-action lawsuit filed against employees.

On Monday, the case dealing with back pay owed to former city employees was supposed to be argued by "Jim" Doherty in 27th Judicial District Court. Instead, attorneys for both sides were able to reach a preliminary settlement without arguing the case in court.

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One of the attorneys for the plaintiffs, [redacted], said the settlement was reached about the settlement.

"The city will pay a total of \$800,000 to settle the lawsuit," [redacted] said. "The exact terms of the settlement are being worked out by both parties."

Bohrer also said the amount and terms of the settlement are being discussed with the city council members.

"The settlement still has to be approved by the city council members," Bohrер said.

Bohrer mentioned this settlement is a good thing for everyone and that it needs to be discussed.

"We just reached the preliminary agreement and it's time to put stuff together."

Bohrer said the trial contributed to the preliminary settlement being hammered out.

"Despite the case being pending (for so long), sometimes lawyers on both sides need a trial to get things straightened out."

Attorneys for the city of Opelousas could not be reached for comment Monday.

In the case, four former city employees are seeking an unspecified amount of money, claiming they should have received a mandated salary increase in 1984, 1985 and 1988. The employees were arguing that their retirement funds were not paid either. The city employees also hoped to obtain raises with the settlement.

The original lawsuit was filed on Feb. 1, 1994, stating that both present and former employees were not paid the mandated salary increase.



However, the judge ruled in favor of the city on Jan. 29, 1996, and the ruling was officially : the plaintiffs filed for a new trial the very next week.

This past September, the city filed a motion countering the former employees' suit claiming balanced budget and there was not enough money to pay for the raises.

The city also argued that the suit would force the city to pay the 2.5 percent both firemen a law requires them to.

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"They settled on \$800,000"...Why not give the employees what they are owed? Didn't they show up for work everyday and do their job?

Posted by: **proudparaprofessional** on Tue Oct 23, 2007 2:41 pm

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