



### Hayward police harassment lawsuit settled for nearly \$5 million

By Eric Kurhi  
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HAYWARD — Attorneys for 14 female police officers who said they had faced systematic harassment based on their gender or sexual orientation announced Wednesday the case has been settled for nearly \$5 million.

The officers had been seeking unspecified damages for discrimination that they said went back to 1982 and continued up through early 2008, said attorney Stan Casper.

City officials said attorneys will determine how the money will be divvied up among the officers.

The lawsuit was settled through the city's insurance companies, which are responsible for paying it. City officials said the settlement will have no effect on the city's general fund or income from Measure A, a utility users tax approved in May.

City Attorney Michael Lawson estimated that the city spent about \$500,000 on the case since it was brought forward in November 2007.

Casper said the amount of the settlement indicated the insurance companies "recognized the problems the city has historically had with women being treated fairly at the police department. Close to \$5 million is not an amount paid unless someone has recognized years of wrongdoing."

Lawson said the settlement does not mean the city acknowledges any liability.

Police Chief Ron Ace, in an e-mail sent to officers and other city employees, said it is "imperative that we all move forward from this lawsuit."

He said discrimination will not be tolerated, nor will retaliation or reprisals against the officers who were involved in the lawsuit, nine of whom are still in the department.

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