



County of Cayuga

J. Justin Woods, JD, MPA
County Administrator

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement on Legislature's Decision Not to Appeal the Andrews Case

Auburn, NY – At its meeting last night, the Cayuga County Legislature decided not to appeal the a recent court decision awarding an approximately \$300,000 judgment to former county jail inmate Richard Andrews stemming from an incident in May of 2009. The result of the Legislature's decision is that the County's insurance policy will pay Mr. Andrews' judgment at no additional cost to the Cayuga County taxpayers. Should the Legislature have proceeded with the appeal, the estimated \$25-50,000 in appeal costs would have come from the County's General Fund, and such expenditure would have been made in a situation where the success on appeal was uncertain.

"The Legislature's decision not to appeal the case was a prudent financial decision, and should not in any way be viewed as a judgment of our Custody Division, who we fully support," said J. Justin Woods, County Administrator.

The issue in the case was whether the withdrawal management care provided for Mr. Andrew's drug dependency was adequate. The withdrawal management administered to Mr. Andrews during his detainment was within the accepted medical and correctional facility practices at the time administered. However, the presiding judge questioned the jail's unwritten policy in the context of subsequent changes to correctional policies, and found the medical care to the proximate cause of Mr. Andrew's seizure-related injuries.

"Over the last several years, the County Legislature opted to litigate this case rather, than settle it, because it believed then, as it does now, that the Sheriff's Custody Division responsible for operating the Cayuga County Jail fulfilled its duty to provide adequate medical care to Mr. Andrews," said Patrick V. Mahunik, Chair of the Legislature.

"While I am disappointed the County is not appealing the decision, I appreciate financial reasons for the Legislature's decision," said Sheriff David Gould. "I want to thank the Legislature for sending the message that they support our staff by litigating the case. More importantly, I am grateful to my correctional staff for the challenging professional work they do every day."

For more information about this press release, please contact

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