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Police agree to go without pay raises

After five weeks of negotiations, the Watsonville Police Officer's Association and the city have signed a new contract that is the same as the old one.

Aware of financial problems facing the city, the WPOA accepted the one-year contract that provides no pay or benefit increases.

"We wanted to dig in and try to help the city out," said Russ Orlandos, secretary of the WPOS, which represents about 40 sworn personnel. He said his group opted for no raises to avoid layoffs.

Orlandos said Watsonville's is the second-lowest-paid police officer's association in the county.

Monthly salaries range from \$2,800 to \$3,700 with medical and retirement benefits.

"The Police Officer's Association realizes they alone cannot solve the city's budget deficit, but did wish to help the city of Watsonville as much as possible with its upcoming budget dilemmas," Orlandos said.