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SUFFOLK COUNTY

County to pay \$110G in wrongful arrest

Suffolk will pay \$110,000 for a 2009 wrongful arrest case of a Lindenhurst man under a proposed settlement members of a legislative committee passed yesterday.

William Slack was holding a backyard christening party at his house in July 2009 for his grandchild, according to court papers. During the party, two guests had a "minor" car accident in front, according to the papers. When police arrived a few hours later, they went to the backyard because, the officers said, fireworks were being aimed at them.

Police arrested Peter Grange, the father of the baby being christened. They also arrested Slack for alleged obstruction of governmental administration, according to a September decision by federal Judge Arthur D. Spatt. The charge was ultimately dismissed.

Slack will get \$5,000. The law firm representing him, Frederick K. Brewington of Hempstead, will get the rest of the money, according to legislative counsel George Nolan.

The Suffolk Ways and Means Committee voted 3-2 in executive session to pass the settlement. Legis. William Spencer (D-Centereach) and Legis. Robert Trotta (R-Fort Salonga) voted against the settlement. Spencer said he found the legal fees "excessive."

Brewington, in an interview, said the legal fees were negotiated down. The case was "settled to the mutual satisfaction of the parties." He said Slack declined to comment. Co-counsel on the case, Chauncey D. Henry of Garden City, declined to comment.

The county attorney's office did not respond to a request for comment.

The vote and settlement amount was announced at the Ways and Means Committee. The full Suffolk Legislature will have to approve bonding to pay for the settlement, said Legis. Steve Stern (D-Dix Hills). The court will have to approve the settlement.