

## County sues Haske



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Juneau County has sued a former sheriff's lieutenant for more than \$164,000 in salary and benefits he was paid between the time of his suspension in 2008 and his termination last year.

In a civil suit filed in Circuit Court Sept. 16, Juneau County alleged that Jeremy Haske had not paid any of the \$164,029.32 it says he owes following his termination by the county last year after a protracted and public employment dispute.

County Treasurer Denise Giebel confirmed Tuesday that the county has not received any payment from Haske since the Sept. 16 court filing.

Haske did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The lawsuit also names Emily Haske, Jeremy Haske's wife, and demands payment from either or both.

The lawsuit cites a state law that spells out the obligations of spouses and asks for a judgment against Emily Haske as well as her husband because "... Emily Haske received direct benefit from the pay and benefits."

Emily Haske filed for divorce from Jeremy Haske May 23, according to court records, which also indicate the Haskes now live at separate New Lisbon addresses.

Milwaukee attorney Michele Ford filed the lawsuit on behalf of the county.

She is the same lawyer who successfully argued for Haske's termination at a 12-day grievance hearing that spanned seven months in 2009 and 2010.

Ford did not immediately respond to a request for comment and clarification about the new lawsuit.

The lawsuit also asks for "interest, costs and fees" but does not provide specifics, such as what interest rate applies and when interest charges began accruing.

Also unclear: what the county's legal options are if it does not get payment - whether the law allows seizure of either of the Haskes' property or garnishment of their wages, for example.

Haske was suspended with pay by Sheriff Brent Oleson for alleged misconduct Aug. 7, 2008 and fired nearly 22 months later on June 1, 2010 after the grievance hearing before the Juneau County Sheriff and Jail Committee.

The committee determined that there was just cause to fire Haske for two of three charges against him - the charge that he engaged in a sexual relationship with a 17-year-old Mauston high school girl in 2000 and the charge that he mishandled alleged sexual misconduct by a former undersheriff.

The committee determined that there was sufficient cause to demote Haske for a third charge - the claim that he failed to report alleged misconduct by a former Sheriff's Department employee who disconnected telephone recording equipment the sheriff had ordered connected to her department phone.

Haske was defended by a former Juneau County assistant district attorney, Shawn Paul, in a fractious grievance hearing that included multiple claims of lying by witnesses, allegations of misconduct aimed by each attorney at the other and even a claim by Ford that she had been physically assaulted by Paul.

Haske appealed his termination to the Circuit Court. Last November, Sauk County Judge Patrick Taggart upheld the committee's decision.