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## County Prepares To Settle Carlock Wrongful Death Suit

Sangamon County officials are preparing to cross their own line in the sand with a seven-figure settlement over a 2008 wrongful death lawsuit.

In 2007, Amon Paul Carlock, who worked as Klutzo the Clown was indicted and behind bars for possession of child porn and traveling to a Philippines orphanage to engage in sexual conduct with minors. He died after a confrontation where jailers would ultimately taze Carlock in an effort to restrain him.

A coroner jury couldn't determine the cause of death because of Carlock's other health problems.

Though county authorities still deny any wrongdoing the family would be paid nearly \$2.6 million dollars, if the the Sangamon County Board approves the settlement Wednesday night.

When added to the nearly \$2.7 million already spent on legal fees, the total burden on taxpayers will be more than \$5.2 million.

"I don't think anybody's doing cartwheels over where the case ended up."

In February, County Administrator Brian McFadden told Newschannel 20 the county felt the best long term strategy was to incur legal costs and fight cases like this wrongful-death lawsuit.

"We don't want to set up the precedent down the road that you can get a quick 500-grand to sue the county and they'll pay you to go away," he said at the time.

But after nearly six-and-a-half years with another \$2.3 million in legal fees expected, McFadden said the case had reached a fork.

"Because you're going to pay the same amount of cost regardless of which direction you take," he said. "Go in the path that has the least amount of risk, which in this case was settlement."







Despite the settlement, Sheriff Neil Williamson is not admitting any blame in the death of Carlock.

"You never know how the jury is going to look at the facts," Carlock said. "We figured it was in the best interest of the county economically to settle."


Williamson said the county may have been more willing to go to trial in the first few years, but he says the

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Williamson said the county may have been more willing to go to trial in the first few years, but he says the case has taken too long, and it's complicated.

"You've got medical experts, computer experts, taser experts," Williamson explained.

A county board committee unanimously approved the settlement price Monday night. Board member Joel Tjelmeland says Wednesday's meeting will likely be a final sign off.

"I don't believe it will be unanimous," he said, "but I think it will be close to unanimous."

The attorneys for the Carlock Estate would say only that statements that claim or infer that the defendants were not at fault in Carlock's death are "inaccurate"

