

West Palm Beach Police Protest SunFest

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WEST PALM BEACH, FL -- The [annual Sunfest musical festival](#) begins today in downtown West Palm Beach and will run through Sunday May 2nd. The 2010 music lineup includes Weezer, Patti Labelle, ZZ Top, REO Speedwagon, Smashmouth, Sister Hazel, Sean Kingston, the B-52's, and Ben Harper.

Downtown traffic is always affected during the time of the famous Florida festival, only this time, plan on seeing many off-duty cops protesting.

As announced earlier in April, West Palm Beach Police Officers planned to protest SunFest with about 100 officers holding the signs for the entire duration (5 Days) of the festival.

The president of the Palm Beach County Police Benevolent Association, which represents the West Palm Beach officers, says he wants to make it clear they are refusing to "volunteer" to sign up and work security for the event.

Police say they want to get the message across to the public that it believes the city has been mispending and mistreating them for the past two years--freezing salaries, reducing benefits, increasing health care costs and taking away some of their holiday pay.

As reported by [WPTV reporter Paige Kornblue](#), the City of West Palm Beach refused a proposal from members of the police union that would have given younger officers on the force five percent pay raises.

According to the president of the Police Benevolent Association, the money would have come from the health care reserves and would have cost the city nothing.

West Palm Beach Mayor Lois Frankel says now is not the time to be giving raises, noting city employees recently took pay cuts and so have her constituents.

The protest is still on and West Palm Beach officers plan to protest every day of the event, starting today.
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