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Newsroom

Yelnosky on R.I. Pension Mediation

Speaking with Rhode Island Public Radio, Professor and Dean Designate Michael Yelnosky interprets postponement of state pension settlement.

From WRNI/Rhode Island's Public Radio: "[Pension Mediation to Continue; Judge Sets September 15th Court Date](#)" by Ian Donnis

- Click [here](#) to read the [Associated Press](#) story. [<http://www.boston.com/news/local/rhode-island/2014/02/12/details-pension-deal-released/3mtkBKnnXPP5LoI8VDcxxl/story.html>]

PROVIDENCE, Feb. 12, 2014: A news conference to unveil a pension settlement Wednesday afternoon was abruptly postponed, although closed-door mediation in the case will continue. Meanwhile, the judge overseeing the dispute has also set a trial for September 15, in the event that a settlement can't be reached.



[...] **Michael Yelnosky, dean-designate of Roger Williams**

University Law School, says he doesn't consider it unusual for Superior Court Judge Sarah Taft-Carter, who is overseeing the pension case, to set a trial date even as talks continue.

"It's not uncommon for settlement negotiations to be going on in cases that have trial dates set," **Yelnosky tells RIPR.** "Sometimes settlement negotiations take place very early on in a civil case, sometimes they take place very close to or even at the trial."

Yelnosky says it would be "reading tea leaves" to interpret Taft-Carter's scheduling of a trial date as an effort to put pressure on the parties to reach a settlement, "but I think that's a logical conclusion to come to, speculative though it may be. Because there hadn't been a trial date set before, something has changed as far as the judge is concerned, and it may be that the judge is signaling to the parties that if this settlement doesn't get worked out, we're headed to a trial; that this needs to get wrapped up or the case is going to be tried."

Yelnosky says the delayed announcement of a settlement "could be an indication that there's a serious snag, maybe one that's even a deal-breaker, and this could be an indication that there just a few more i's that need to be dotted and t's that need to be crossed. This happens in negotiations, that you think you've got a deal and you do in fact have a deal in principle, but when it comes time to reduce that deal to a writing that you'll be held accountable for, there are some things that you didn't anticipate that come up."
[...]

For full story, click [here](http://ripr.org/post/pension-settlement-appears-back-track#.Uvus-Wkk3ps.twitter). [http://ripr.org/post/pension-settlement-appears-back-track#.Uvus-Wkk3ps.twitter]