

SCCC and civil service: Separation anxiety

Sunday July 11, 2010 10:21 PM By Rick Brand

Suffolk Community College may have won its independence from county government, but the change is now having unintended consequences.

Civil Service officials have ruled that county white and blue collar workers can no longer be considered for civil service promotions at the college nor can college union workers move to promotions in the county. In addition, college workers will not be able to "bump and retreat" back to another county positions should jobs be abolished or layoffs occur. There are about 700 white and blue collar jobs at the college.

Alan Schneider, civil service head, said the change took effect because the agreement makes the college a separate jurisdiction from the county like a town and village. The change was supposed to take effect Jan. 1 but was delayed until March because of leadership changes at the college and delays in the new payroll system.

Cheryl Felice, Association of Municipal Employees president, said the issue arose in after two county workers wanted to take promotions into jobs at the college. One worker took the job but the other decided to stay in a county post out of concern options would be more limited. Felice said the union has already filed a grievance and will file a lawsuit by the end of the month. Ironically, she said the college, which sought more autonomy, is supporting the union on the issue.