



The 93 Beacon

We Make Northern New England Happen!



1.8 Million Reasons to Belong to a Union

More than 350 current & retired members of AFSCME Local 851 in the City of New Bedford, MA are now sharing a total of \$1.845 million in back pay that was illegally stripped from their paychecks in 2011 by the city's former mayor.

The money arrived in the workers' paychecks in mid-August, nearly eight years to the day that former Mayor Scott Lang announced he was implementing the furlough despite clear language in the law that required the union's consent. It was a hard-fought win for the union and a shining example of AFSCME Council 93's "never quit" attitude when it comes to fighting for members.

"This win sends a loud and clear message that we will fight for as long as it takes to achieve justice whenever our members are treated unfairly," said Council 93 Executive Director Frank Moroney. "We're pleased that we were finally able to force the city to pay this long-overdue debt to the hard working men and women of Local 851." The long road to victory started with a Nov. 2011 ruling against the furlough by the Commonwealth's Employment Relations

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Local 1067 Works with Council to Prep for Privatization Fight

Members of Local 1067 turned out in force on August 10th to protest Massasoit Community College's efforts to explore the privatization of cafeteria and maintenance services currently staffed by AFSCME members.

More than 100 AFSCME members & staff rallied at the Brockton, MA campus before heading inside to address members of the college's board of trustees. Local 1067 President and Council 93 Executive Board Vice President Kevin Hanley educated the trustees on the pitfalls of privatization, which include a number of hidden and unanticipated costs, a reduction in the quality of services, and the elimination of decent, living-wage jobs in the community. Hanley also warned the trustees of the dangers associated with replacing trusted, long-serving staff with a revolving pool of strangers that contractors will use to replace the current workers, pointing to recent examples of arrests of contracted maintenance workers for theft of

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Shelley Avila-Martins pictured at the New Bedford Zoo with Emily the elephant.

AFSCME Calls on Governor Baker to Address Safety Concerns in DMH Hospitals

After repeated attempts over several years to convince management in the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health (DMH) of the need for tighter security measures at inpatient facilities, Council 93 has turned to Governor Charlie Baker for direct intervention. Nearly 1200 DMH direct care workers from AFSCME and other unions signed a petition asking Governor Baker to take immediate action by installing metal detectors at the entrances of all seven DMH inpatient facilities with the hope of drastically reducing the amount of knives and other dangerous weapons that are routinely found in patient belongings and on the grounds of the hospitals.

The petition, drafted by Council 93 and circulated through Local Union leaders at DMH facilities, was

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student property including prescription drugs. Local 1067 Parliamentarian Sheila Kearns, who works at Massasoit, also addressed the trustees. Kearns highlighted the important contributions AFSCME members make every day on the campus and questioned the priorities of management officials who have enjoyed significant pay increases in recent years, while simultaneously looking for ways to cut costs through privatization and other means. Kearns closed her remarks with a reminder for the trustees. “This college works because we do,” she said.

While college officials have stated that they are currently only “exploring the possibility” of privatizing the services, Local 1067 and Council 93 are preparing for the worst case scenario and proceeding as though college officials will move towards the next step, which is issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to seek bids from potential vendors. Council 93 has connected Local 1067 leaders with experts in our International Union’s Washington, DC office to lay the groundwork for a formal bid from the union should an RFP be issued. The Council is also researching the track record of companies likely to bid on such a contract. In addition, the college has been notified of their legal obligations under the [Taxpayer Protection Act](#), commonly referred to as the Pacheco Law. The law requires any proposed privatization contract valued at \$560,000 or higher to be reviewed by the Massachusetts State Auditor to ensure it saves taxpayers money while providing an equal or better level of service.

As is often the case when a Council 93 local is facing a crisis, members of other Council 93 locals in the region turned out at the rally to support their brothers and sisters in Local 1067. Those in attendance included: Council 93 Recording Secretary and Local 1517 President Nancy Silva; Council 93 Executive Board Member and Local 72 President Joanne Cooke; and Local 1700 President Jason Hook. Representatives from the South Shore Labor Council were also on hand to show solidarity.

“Local 1067 is extremely grateful and heartened by the support we received at the rally from leaders and members of other AFSCME Locals,” said Local 1067 President Kevin Hanley. “We also truly appreciate the support, resources and guidance we received and continue to receive from Council 93. At this point, we don’t know what the future holds for our members at Massasoit, but we do know that we are ready for any fight that comes down the road.”

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hand-delivered to Governor Baker’s office on August 25th by Local 72 President Joanne Cooke. Prior to delivering the petition, Cooke talked with State House News Reporter Andy Metzger in a meeting arranged by the Council’s Communications Department. The issue was covered extensively by the State House News [in this article](#), which appeared in multiple news outlets across the state.

The union has been pushing for this simple, common-sense measure for several years but has stepped up efforts over the past several months after a patient at Taunton State

Hospital used a pen to stab two AFSCME members. Had a knife been used instead of a pen, the two AFSCME workers would have likely been killed from the attack. Yet, DMH leaders continue to

resist the union, stating they believe metal detectors would create a correctional facility atmosphere, an image they don’t want to foster. Of course, metal detectors are routinely used in both public and private facilities including the State House and state office buildings.

“We’ve been trying to convince management for years now that something needs to be done to reduce the likelihood of a weapon being carried through the doors of these hospitals,” said Council 93 Executive Director Frank Moroney. “Unfortunately, they seem more concerned about appearances than the safety of our members, the patients they care for, and the hundreds of visitors who pass through these doors every week. It’s our hope that Governor Baker will see the need for this basic measure of security before a tragedy occurs.”



Pictured above, Local 72 President Joanne Cooke delivers petitions to Gov. Baker’s office. Photo c/o State House News Service.

Council 93 Memorial Leadership Award

Council 93's Scholarship Committee is now accepting nominations for the Council 93 Memorial Leadership Award.

Awarded in memory of our late brothers and sisters of Council 93, the award is given annually to a current member in good standing who through exemplary action or dogged determination, exemplifies the spirit of a true trade unionist. Nominations must be received NO LATER than SEPTEMBER 22, 2017.

Each Council 93 Local Union may nominate one member for the award based on the criteria cited above. Click [here](#) for detailed information and instructions on the nomination process. Employees of Council 93 are not eligible for this award at any time during their paid service to Council 93.

A plaque, together with a check in the amount of \$100.00 will be presented to the recipient at Council 93's Biennial Convention in November.

Questions can be addressed via email to [Anna Owen](#) or by calling Anna at 617-367-6015.

Donate to AFSCME's Hurricane Relief Fund

AFSCME Houston city workers are doing heroic work with their fire and police colleagues, rescuing flooded families and delivering clean water. One AFSCME member even helped deliver a baby in the back of a truck.

These AFSCME sisters and brothers are also among those victimized and displaced by this storm. The coming weeks and months will be difficult ones as they try to put their lives back together.

You can help by making a tax-deductible donation to AFSCME's special fund to help over 7,000 AFSCME Texas members in impacted areas. Let your fellow members know that their AFSCME family nationwide is with them. [Please give today.](#)

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Board (CERB). Lang left office a few months after the CERB ruling but his successor Jon Mitchell [continued to fight AFSCME](#) in court, forcing a long legal battle that ended with a showdown in the Massachusetts Supreme Court. In December of 2016, the state's highest court ruled in AFSCME's favor and the city began identifying the workers who were owed the money and calculating the amounts due. On July 20th, the \$1,845,942 in payments were approved by a unanimous vote of the New Bedford City Council. A month later, the funds were finally in the hands of AFSCME members.

Donna Cordeiro, who worked for the city's library for more than 38 years, received a check totaling \$5,976 (before taxes)-even though she retired from her position two years ago. Cordeiro, who said she will use the money to pay down some debt and build her savings account, praised the union for continuing to fight and ensuring that retirees would receive all the money they were shorted during the furlough. "I think AFSCME did a great job," Cordeiro said. "They did all they could for us and they fought until the end. They stuck with us and didn't give up." Cordeiro added that she felt fortunate to have AFSCME fighting for her, noting that non-union management employees cannot recoup the lost funds. "If you weren't in the union, you lose," she said.

Local 851 member and Steward Shelley Avila-Martins is among the current workers who received the long overdue money in August. A zoo keeper at the city's Buttonwood Park Zoo for the past 16 years, Avila-Martins recalled the difficulty the financial hardship placed on her family when her pay was drastically cut. "It was rough," she said. "I had just had a baby and we already had a two-year old. At the time, the loss of money every week hurt me really bad." Avila-Martins knew her union was fighting for her, but admits she was doubtful at times that city leaders would ever pay their debt. "Honestly, sometimes I figured I'd be dead and gone and my kids or my grandkids would end up having to fight for it," she said with a laugh.

For Avila-Martins, who received \$6,899 in back pay before taxes, the money will ease the transition to a new apartment for her and her family. "It's nice not to have to struggle to come up with that security deposit and first and last month rent," she said. "And, I even have a little left over for a rainy day." Avila-Martins said she continues to hear stories from co-workers about the difference the money is making for her union brothers and sisters. "It's been a blessing in a lot of peoples' lives," she said. "People are going through tough times and this is making a real difference." She added that the victory is just one of many examples why workers need union protection and has "earned us respect" from members who, from time-to-time, question the value of the union. "As a steward, I tell people all the time that the union is only as strong as its members and if we stay together, there is nothing we can't accomplish."

11th Annual Memorial Scholarship Golf Tournament Raises \$43,000 for Scholarship Fund!



On July 10, 2017, Council 93 hosted the 11th Annual Memorial Scholarship Golf Tournament at the Olde Scotland Links Golf Course in Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

Thanks to the generous support of our sponsors and golfers, we raised a total of \$43,000 for the [Scholarship Fund](#). A full list of sponsors can be found [here](#).

This year, Local 1368 took home the trophy. Pictured from left are Local 1368 President Dan Morse, Vice President Francisco Ojeda, Sergeant-at-Arms Christopher Duquette, and Brian Spencer.

We look forward to seeing you next year!

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