



Hooksett DPW Director Resigns in Wake of Union Complaints

When AFSCME members working for the public works department in Hooksett, NH were faced with a verbally abusive and vindictive boss, they had two choices: learn to accept the stress and anguish that comes with working in a hostile environment or stand up and fight back. Fortunately for themselves and future employees of the town, the members of Local 1580 reached out to the Council for help, then took the courageous path and confronted the problem head on.

In what proved to be a textbook example of how a union can improve working conditions for its members, Council 93 teamed up with Local 1580 members to shine a bright light on the problem. The effort would eventually result in Public Works Director Leo Lessard's abrupt departure. Sending the boss packing involved the work of multiple Council departments. Staff representatives worked with the legal department to prepare a class-action grievance, while the Council's communications department worked with AFSCME attorneys to help the local detail



Hooksett Public Works employees Jeffrey Lord Jr. of Manchester, Scott Marshall of Hooksett and Chad Boyd told AFSCME they were yelled at, threatened with termination and subjected to disparaging remarks about fellow workers by DPW Director Leo Lessard. (Photo by Mark Hayward courtesy of UNION LEADER).

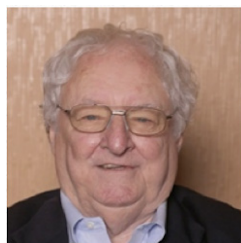
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Executive Director's Report

Candidates on the Road to the White House Stop at AFSCME Headquarters in Washigton, D.C.

We're still more than eight months away from the New Hampshire Presidential Primary but our union has already started the process of determining which candidate will have AFSCME's backing for the office of President of the United States.

Questionnaires were sent to all declared Republican and Democratic candidates seeking their opinions and positions on a wide-range of issues. Unfortunately, the ten current Republican candidates opted not to participate in our endorsement process and did not return a completed questionnaire. Democratic Party candidates



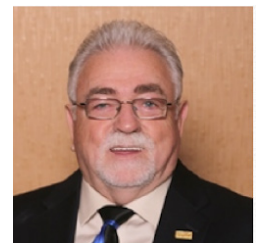
Exec. Director
Frank Moroney

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President's Column

Looming Threat Will Make Us AFSCME Strong

Threats and attacks are nothing new to public-sector union members. We're constantly facing attempts to strip us of our hard-earned benefits, privatize our jobs, or weaken our collective bargaining rights. Sometimes, these fights are statewide. In other instances, they're confined to the borders of a city or town. But a new kind of threat now looms over our union, one with the ability to deal a single, devastating blow to every public-sector union in the nation. The United States Supreme Court is in the proces of deciding whether or not to hear a case that challenges the ability of public-sector unions to charge a "fair share" fee to members who do not want to pay union dues, but are happy to accept



President
Charlie Owen

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White House

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Hillary Clinton, Martin O'Malley and Bernie Sanders all submitted detailed written responses to our questions and as such, they were invited to attend the June quarterly meeting of our International Executive Board (IEB) to make a personal plea for support and take questions from IEB members.

While everyone knows Hillary Clinton, most of the country still has a lot to learn about Martin O'Malley, who served as Governor of Maryland from 2007-2015. The same can be said for Vermont U.S. Senator and former Mayor of Burlington Bernie Sanders who, while well-known here in New England, will also need to spend a considerable amount of time introducing himself to the rest of the country. After listening to and meeting each candidate, I believe all three deserve thoughtful consideration for our endorsement. I also believe all three will make each other better candidates and will play a key role in ensuring the Democrats put forth a strong candidate in the general election.

As the IEB member representing Northern New England, I want to assure our members that I will be an active and vocal participant in this process and I will thoroughly examine the candidates' positions on issues that are most important to union members and the middle-class. As elected leaders of our union, it's our job to do the in-depth research, to dig deep into the facts, and not simply trust what we all see and hear on Fox News, CNN and MSNBC. I want our members to be aware of this process, the great deal of thought and work that goes into it, and most importantly, my commitment to being an integral part of it. Why? Quite simply, it's because the work and commitment involved in this process will be virtually meaningless unless our members trust in it and believe in us. This belief and trust will serve as the motivation we need to work extremely hard for our candidate, whoever that may be. And indeed, if we want to be successful, we will all have to work very hard – in every state, city, town and precinct. I respectfully ask for your trust in this process and I promise to keep you well informed as it moves forward. Best wishes to all members for a safe and enjoyable summer season.

AFSCME Strong

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and benefit from the fruits of union negotiations. The case, known as Friedrichs versus the California Teachers Association, would significantly hinder the ability of public employee unions to adequately represent members and continue to fight off attacks on our rights and benefits. This is not the first Supreme Court challenge to fair share fees. But the current make-up of the nine-member court makes acceptance of the case and a ruling against us, a very real possibility. That's the bad news. The good news is your union is actively preparing for the possibility of losing fair share fees and here in the Council 93 region we're ahead of the pack. For starters, most of our members are full dues paying members. Most importantly, the new leadership at the Council has made a strong and concerted effort in recent years to improve service to our members while simultaneously reducing operating costs. That work is now being complemented by our participation in the national "AFSCME Strong" campaign. We are joining other AFSCME affiliates around the country in an ambitious but achievable goal of having meaningful one-on-one conversations with 80% of our membership over the next ten months. To accomplish that goal, a group of AFSCME Local leaders and staff attended a two-day coaches training in May. These coaches are already in the process of training more than 1700 activists who will help us make those individual connections. In addition to helping our members better realize the benefits of having a strong union, this effort will also help us increase our ranks of volunteer member organizers and build voluntary membership in PEOPLE, our union's political action fund.

It is absolutely critical that we engage and educate all members on the importance of the union. But in my opinion, it is especially important that we connect with younger members as this group has not experienced a fight like the one we may have ahead of us. Most of what they have now in terms of rights and benefits was fought for and secured by the men and women who came before them. This is a tremendous opportunity to build and solidify a new generation of union leaders. In that respect, this looming threat could provide us with the motivation we need to reinvigorate our union and make us stronger than ever.

Resignation

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complaints against Lessard in a "Vote of No Confidence" document. The members then bravely voted to approve the document at meeting of the local.

A few weeks after the vote, Council 93 arranged a meeting with Manchester Union Leader reporter Mark Hayward to let the public know exactly what was happening in their public works department. The meeting was attended by a group of current workers and a few of the 17 workers who had quit their positions in recent years because of the stressful environment created by Lessard.

The workers talked for hours with the reporter, providing detailed accounts of the abuse and intimidation. One worker told of being forced to take medication to help him cope with the stress. Another admitted to crying regularly on his morning commute to work. Even former management official Doug Urquart agreed to talk with the reporter by phone after quitting in disgust over Lessard's behavior. Urquart, who did not have union protections because of his management status, told the Union Leader that Lessard hadn't changed in the 3 ½ years he had worked with him. "He'd rather create turmoil, discontent and low morale," Urquart said.

Shortly after the Union Leader reporter started calling the town administrator and town councilors for comment, Lessard was placed on paid administrative leave. Three days after the news story was run on the front page of the paper, Lessard resigned his position.

AFSCME Nurse Saves the Day!

AFSCME school nurses in Lowell, MA turned out in force on June 17th to be part of a Lowell School Committee ceremony honoring their colleague Tami Hayhurst, (pictured below 4th from left). Recent actions by Tami possibly saved the lives of a number of children who had boarded a bus for home at the end of the school day. After receiving a call in her office indicating the driver of the bus was experiencing an itchy rash, Tami immediately suspected an allergic reaction and quickly headed to the school parking lot. Noticing the driver was beginning to wheeze and have difficulty breathing, Tami convinced her to come into the school cafeteria for further examination. The driver's ability to breathe and overall condition deteriorated rapidly, requiring the experienced

nurse to administer an injection of epinephrine, a chemical that opens the airways in the lungs. EMS arrived a few minutes later and transported the driver to a nearby hospital where she recovered. If not for Tami's skills, instincts and training, the driver would have likely suffered the life threatening attack and could have lost consciousness while behind the wheel of a bus full of children. AFSCME Council 93 salutes Tami and her fellow nurses in Local 1705A for the skilled and compassionate care they provide and the critical work they do every day in our schools.



Lowell School nurses turned out to show their support for Tami Hayhurst, (4th from left), who was being honored by the Lowell School Committee.

Working Behind the Walls of Maine State Prison

The 40-foot wall topped with razor wire at the Maine State Prison in Warren helps to protect the public from the dangerous criminals inside. But these barriers do little to protect AFSCME Correctional Officers like Sergeant Curtis Doyle. A 20-year veteran officer, Doyle must rely primarily on his experience, intelligence and sometimes even his sense of humor to get him home safely to his family every day.

The prison's official website lists a staff of 410 and an inmate capacity of 916. But only about 220 of the current staff are correctional officers and those officers are split among all three shifts. As a result, Doyle and his colleagues regularly find themselves alone with as many as 70 hard-core criminals, including convicted murderers, rapists and armed robbers. When it comes time to feed the prisoners, two officers are left alone to maintain order among 150 prisoners gathered in the "chow hall."

A "man down" body alarm carried by the officers will trigger a quick response if an officer is able to push it in time. But as Doyle is quick to point out, it only takes a few seconds for someone to be assaulted or even killed. To illustrate his point, Doyle recently took a Council 93 staff member on a tour of the prison. The tour included a visit to a two tier cell "pod" housing approximately 65 inmates who at the time were freely roaming the common area. When the two reached the end of a row of cells approximately 40 yards from the only exit, Doyle told the staffer to turn around and look at the crowd of prisoners standing between them and the exit. "You see," Doyle said. "Every time you turn your back in here you turn your back on a killer. If they wanted us right now, they could get us."

Indeed, officers have been assaulted many times during Doyle's tenure. He has seen staff members

beaten, stabbed, doused with blood, urine and feces, and held hostage. In the past few years, four inmates have been murdered by other prisoners. One day, Doyle came very close to being a victim himself when he was encircled by a crowd of angry inmates who were on the verge of rioting because they were unable to purchase food from prison vending machines. According to Doyle, the snacks available in the machines are relished by the prisoners who quickly grow tired of the food prepared and served each day by their fellow inmates. "So when the machines break down, it creates tension," Doyle said. On this particular day, the machines had been out of service for several

weeks and the prisoners were mistakenly told they had been repaired. When they flocked to the machines and discovered otherwise, Doyle found himself alone and surrounded by an angry mob. "I thought to myself, I can't believe I'm going to die over a honey bun," Doyle recalled. Doyle freely admits he was unnerved, but he didn't let the inmates know. Instead he diffused the situation by cracking a few jokes and slowly making his way

through the crowd.

Unlike the prison employee that Doyle remembers being taken hostage and repeatedly stabbed with a piece of chain-link fence or his fellow officer that had to undergo a year of testing for HIV after an inmate threw a cup of his blood in the officer's face, Doyle was able to make it home safe that day. But memories like that and countless other difficult experiences, take their toll on officers. Studies show the average life expectancy of a corrections officer is 59 years old.

Of course, as Doyle points out, it's not just the officers who are affected. "When you sign on to work at the Maine State Prison, your family signs on too," Doyle says. "It brings a great deal of stress to everyone."

So the next time you hear someone claiming public employees have easy jobs, tell them about Sergeant Curtis Doyle and the men and women who put their lives on the line every day at the Maine State Prison.



Local 1386 Gives Back

For the last three years now, Local 1386 members have played an integral part in the community where they live and work. Seeing a need for help from the community, Local 1386 members jumped in to bolster the donations for Seacoast Family Food Pantry and so began a tradition.

The Seacoast Family Food Pantry (SFFPP) began in 1816 by a small group of women whose goal was to feed the families of fishermen in Portsmouth, NH. Their focus is not only to provide food and basic necessities, but to inspire, encourage and teach families how to make nutritionally sound food choices and prepare healthy meals.

Local 1386 hosts food drives twice a year, (May and November), by placing food donation boxes in various locations throughout Portsmouth. This May, they collected over 775 pounds of food! While they are in the process of collecting the food, the City of

Portsmouth allows them to use an electric traffic direction sign board to advertise the event. According to Secretary Frank Gillespie, "...our Local feels this is a truly gratifying way to be involved in our community and we encourage other locals to get more involved in their own communities."



Left to right are Steven DeTrolgio, Bryan Whitaker (Treasurer), Francis Haran, and Frank Gillespie (Secretary).

Massachusetts Legislature Rejects Baker Proposal to Increase GIC Contributions

Aggressive lobbying by Council 93 staff and grassroots efforts by members helped to defeat a proposal by Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker to shift more Group Insurance Commission (GIC) health insurance costs onto state and higher education workers.

Baker's proposed FY2016 budget called for a 5% increase in premium contribution rates for workers hired before 2003. The 5% increase, coupled with recent co-pay and deductible increases, would have led to \$1,500 - \$2,000 in additional out-of-pocket costs for thousands of AFSCME members. AFSCME worked in coalition with other public sector unions to ensure Baker's proposal was not adopted in the FY16 budgets approved by the House and Senate.



Enjoy the thrill & excitement at some of the best theme parks nationwide with Union Plus Entertainment Discounts through Working Advantage.

You'll save from \$3 to \$26 a ticket off the normal theme park ticket prices. Think of the savings for a family of four: You could save from \$12 to \$104 on your theme park vacation!

Most theme park tickets are valid for one year (or the current season) and may be used anytime. See the sample list of participating theme parks below. (Note: some parks are seasonal--tickets not available in the off-season.)

<http://www.unionplus.org/theme-park-discounts>

2nd Annual Family Day & Softball Tournament Set for September 19th!

On September 19th, Council 93 is hosting a Family Day and Softball Tournament at DCR's Houghton's Pond in Milton.

All proceeds benefit the Council 93 Memorial Scholarship Fund, which helps AFSCME families meet the high cost of a college education. The \$350 team entry fee includes:

- Softball Game
- Coffee & Donuts
- BBQ Lunch & Non-Alcoholic Beverages
- Games for Adults & Kids
- Gift Items for All Participants
- A trophy will be awarded to the winning team.

The team contact will be notified of any changes due to inclement weather. For more information and to receive a registration form email: info@afscme93.org or call (617) 367-6015.



We look forward to seeing you on September 19th!

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