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UNFAIR LABOR PRACTICES COULD LEAD TO TEAMSTERS STRIKE

Union Fighting to Save Security, Fire & Safety Officers' Jobs

In February 2017, Navy Pier Inc. (NPI) – the company that manages Navy Pier – issued a request for proposal (RFP) to replace 43 fire safety and security officers after originally withdrawing the RFP in October 2016. These officers are currently employed by SMG and represented by Teamsters Local 727. Replacing the officers with another company, along with the elimination of their pensions as well as dramatic wage and benefit cuts by NPI, could lead to a strike at the popular Chicago tourist attraction.

The new vendor NPI has selected is Allied Universal, an alleged SEIU Local 1 signatory. In a letter to SMG security officers, NPI informed the officers that “Allied Universal Security will begin transitioning their services and training personnel to assume responsibilities at the Pier.” The letter goes on to state that all full-time officers will be “extended an opportunity to join the Allied Universal Security team,” and, “in addition, all part-time officers will also be given an opportunity to apply for a position with Allied Universal.”

What the letter didn't mention was that Allied was planning wage cuts of up to 30%, the elimination of pension, and other benefit cuts including health care for those officers that remain.

“In these uncertain security times that we live in, to replace seasoned public safety personnel with less experienced workers is unconscionable,” said John Coli Jr., President of Local 727. “NPI is a multi-million-dollar company that organizes itself as a nonprofit and apparently, it just wants to save a little money without regard to the huge potential cost in human lives.”

To underscore NPI's misplaced spending priorities, it was reported by the Chicago Sun-Times last June that NPI executives received ‘big bonuses’ even though attendance at Navy Pier has fallen.

When the union brought its members' concerns to NPI's attention, its chief operating officer, Brian Murphy, made it clear that he doesn't care about Local 727 members, their livelihoods, and whether they get laid off.

“NPI's and Allied's callous attitude toward dedicated, long-time public servants and their collusion with another union-backed vendor to replace them are utterly despicable,” Coli said. “These unfair labor practices not only are an affront to our members, but they also could affect the safety and security of the general public who visit Navy Pier.”

Coli emphasized that if Allied Universal doesn't do the right thing and guarantee the union members' jobs and abide by the current collective bargaining agreement, the union will have no choice but to strike.

Teamsters Local 727 is an affiliate of Teamsters Joint Council 25, America's premier labor union for Chicago, Illinois and northwest Indiana.