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1300 WEST HIGGINS ROAD • SUITE 220 • PARK RIDGE, ILLINOIS 60068 • PHONE (847) 292-1225 • FAX (847) 292-1412

## NEWS >>

### **TEAMSTERS, BROOKFIELD ZOO MANAGEMENT REACH TENTATIVE AGREEMENT, PRESERVE WORKERS' HEALTH CARE**

The Teamsters Local 727 Bargaining Committee and Chicago Zoological Society (CZS) management on April 21 reached a tentative agreement on a five-year contract, which preserves health care benefits for nearly 300 workers at Brookfield Zoo.

Teamsters Local 727 represents full-time and seasonal zoo workers, including zookeepers, groundskeepers and patrol officers.

“From Day One, we made it abundantly clear that health care was the most important issue for our members,” said John Coli Jr., President of Local 727. “We are glad that zoo management finally heard our members’ concerns and came to the table ready to work with us to ensure these workers and their families are taken care of for years to come.”

Contract negotiations began in November with the previous four-year contract set to expire Dec. 31, 2015. Over the course of six months and multiple contract extensions, the Local 727 Bargaining Committee — composed of Brookfield Zoo workers, union stewards and union representatives — met with CZS management 14 times.

“It was a huge challenge. We had to sacrifice a lot of time and patience in order to get to where we are,” said union steward Carrie Sapienza, a Local 727 Bargaining Committee member. “But we never wavered, and we were united.”

The tentative agreement now goes to a member vote.

Teamsters Local 727, an affiliate of Teamsters Joint Council 25, represents about 10,000 hardworking men and women throughout the Greater Chicago area.