



On The Move

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Union Files Charges against SEPTA

Local 234 filed charges against SEPTA on Monday with the Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board. The Union charged SEPTA with trying to dictate who will represent the Local in conducting union business, a violation of SEPTA's obligation to deal with the union in good faith. Picking and choosing who management is willing to deal with is bad faith on the part of SEPTA.

Here's what happened. The President of Local 234 designated a union section officer at Wyoming Shop to represent the Local as an observer of a "process summary;" a "time study" used to increase production. Mike Wright, SEPTA's head honcho at Wyoming refused to deal with the Union's appointee, preferring instead to have a different union rep involved in the process. According to Wright, he had a "personality conflict" with the section officer named by the Local. In truth, Wright's real problem is that the section officer is a strong advocate for the members and is *willing to stand up to Wright* when he is wrong.

As soon as the Union found out what Wright was up to, calls went out to top management and SEPTA's labor relations department. The Union insisted that it had the right to select a representative of its own choosing without interference from management. Nonetheless, on Monday, SEPTA denied the Union's appointee the right to act as an observer, thereby engaging in bad faith dealings with the Local. Unfair labor practices were filed immediately. SEPTA is being charged with failing to bargain in good faith and anti-union animus.

Disrespect toward Workers is a Major Problem at SEPTA

Wright's actions at Wyoming Shop, disrespect and hostility toward the Union and the members, is part of a larger problem of anti-worker animosity throughout the ranks of management. The arrogance of SEPTA supervision shows up every day, in the way members are disrespected, disciplined, and mistreated. Take Mike Wright for example.

Wright is a little man on a low rung of SEPTA management. But now that he has some authority, he thinks he is king of the hill. Like other SEPTA managers, Wright came up as one of the "cowards" in the neighborhood. As a result, he got pushed around by the other kids and couldn't defend himself. But now that he has a position of power he wants to flex his "SEPTA muscles" in a way that he couldn't at an earlier age. So he tries to bully the workers under his control. Wright will soon be stopped from his bullying ways.

However, what makes matters worse is that the lower ranking inmates, such as Wright, are running SEPTA's management asylum---with support from the top. Wright's boss is Joe Brennan, SEPTA's Chief Officer of Vehicle Maintenance. Brennan is old school. He likes to hide in the shadows and have his subordinates do the dirty work. He refuses to deal with the Union on an equal footing. When notified about the problem at Wyoming, Brennan did nothing to fix Wright's unfair labor practices, although he said he would. If Brennan doesn't want to solve problems, what

good is he? After all, he's getting paid big bucks to control Wright and other maintenance directors. The problem is, Brennan's idea of control is to let the inmates run the asylum.

Unfortunately, the same is true over at labor relations. Labor is supposed to enforce the contract and the law when managers violate their contractual or legal obligations. Yet many at labor relations would rather be "friends with management" instead of enforcing the contract negotiated with the Union, which brings us to the 2016 negotiations set to officially open July 13.

As explained in a recent *On the Move*, Local 234's goals in contract negotiations will not be easy to achieve. On the economic front we are fighting for pension reforms, wage increases, and the preservation of our top-of-the-line health benefits. On the non-economic front, we are fighting for dignity on the job, challenging an ingrained managerial culture that refuses to respect the rights of our members or the commitments SEPTA made at the bargaining table.

Our success will depend on the skills of our negotiating team and the unity and *determination* of our members. We have to come together under a common agenda and be willing to sacrifice for what is rightfully ours. We might even have to strike over non-economic issues--- unless SEPTA does something to stop the bullies trying to flex their "SEPTA muscles."

Golf Revenue Supports Legal Defense Fund

On July 1, Local 234 is sponsoring a Chicken/Fish Fry fundraiser to support the legal defense of Midvale Operator Katrina Sanders who is facing criminal charges for homicide by vehicle. The fundraiser is supported by the Local's "*Take Care of Our Own*" Fund.

Take Care of Our Own is a "self-help" fund financed by Local 234's Annual Golf Outing. The Golf Outing raises money through advertisements in an Ad Book, the fees charged to the golfers, and from organizations that sponsor a golf hole to promote their business or their cause. Over the years, many unions have supported the golf outing, as have other friends of the Local.

The 2016 Golf Outing in June raised more money than it spent. The cost of the facilities at Northampton Country Club were covered by the revenue generated at the event. \$5,000 went to finance ten scholarships for Local 234 members. In total, the Golf Outing has made over 80 scholarships possible. No dues money was used for June's golf event or on the scholarships sponsored by the *Take Care of Our Own* Fund.

Right now, *Take Care of Our Own* is supporting the July 1 fundraiser for Sister Sanders. Tickets for the event are \$15, this includes a raffle ticket for the 65" high definition TV. Since *Take Care of Our Own* is paying for the food and the TV, **all of the proceeds from the event will be turned over to the Sanders' Defense Fund.**

Don't forget, the outcome of the Sanders' case could have a big impact on how other counties, including Philadelphia, handle pedestrian accidents in the future. Sanders' case is therefore important to every SEPTA driver, including those in maintenance. Please show your solidarity by making a \$15 donation to the Sanders' Legal Defense Fund.

WE MUST AND WE WILL