



On The Move

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The Silence at 1234 is Deafening---SEPTA Ignores Incompetent Managers at the Worst Possible Time

It's becoming an epidemic.

We recently reported that SEPTA manager Lou Crocetti made a racist statement concerning his plan to fire an employee he referred to as "that black bitch."

Republicans in Harrisburg plan to cut funding for SEPTA and promote a new "privatization" scheme, selling off our most lucrative routes, while depriving the rest of the system of the funds needed to function properly, just as they lobby to break Local 234 and other public sector unions. With TRUMP cuts coming in transportation funding, SEPTA is entering crisis mode.

Crocetti is still on the payroll, even though SEPTA knows he has been a serial offender for years. Meanwhile, **Erin Andrea**, the EEO attorney who posted a series of rants using the n...word, also remains at her desk.

Cashier boss Stacey Richardson is another case. Richardson has falsified employee records, denied a cashier urgent medical care by firing him and threatened a section officer; telling her in the middle of a grievance hearing: "You're going to get yours, you'll see. It may not be me, but you'll get yours, you'll see."

The section officer reported Richardson to the EEO. Guess who handled her complaint? Erin Andrea, the now notorious EEO lawyer! Andrea's solution? Keep the section officer out of hearings involving Richardson! Hard to believe, but true. The boss gets away with threatening violence and the victim gets told she can't do her job.

Managers like Crocetti, Richardson and Andrea, who disrespect and mistreat our members, are a cancer that must be exorcized. This is especially important now. Here's why;

SEPTA is in a *fight for survival* on two fronts. On one front, SEPTA is facing heightened competition from Uber. On the other, Republicans in Washington and Harrisburg are out to cut SEPTA's funding. In fact, talk of *breaking SEPTA up* is a *hot topic* among republicans and lobbyists in Harrisburg. At the same time, these politicians plan to sabotage and drain the finances of public employee unions, like Local 234, and then bust them.

This is no joke. It's serious business for both union and management. Legislative attacks on our jobs and benefits are real. Privatization is one of those attacks.

Privatization of Public Transit

What is privatization? Privatization is a corporate take-over of public sector transit services. In the 1990's, a lobby emerged in the country to privatize *profitable* transit routes. If carried out, highly traveled lines would be offered up to private bidders. Companies like MV Transportation, Laidlaw and others would bid on the work, just like they do for paratransit services. State and federal funds would be

used to *subsidize* their operating costs to ensure that the private companies turn a hefty profit.

Privatization is also a form of union busting. If SEPTA routes are privatized, the union loses members and bargaining power. The operators, maintenance workers and managers who work for SEPTA would find their jobs in jeopardy, and SEPTA would enter a death spiral.

In short, the privatization of public transit services would be a disaster for workers and managers alike---because no one's job or benefits would be safe.

Cooperation can lead to success

In the 1990's, Local 234 and other transit unions were successful in turning back the privatization lobby. We can be successful again. But to succeed, union and management have to cooperate with one another *as equal partners*, not subordinates, to improve the SEPTA system.

Cooperation does not mean collaboration. The Union will continue to fight to protect our contract rights and benefits. Cooperation

simply means we work together in order to promote our common interests.

Cooperation depends on high employee morale. And to improve morale, the workers who keep the SEPTA system running must be treated with dignity and respect on the job, unlike the way Crocetti, Richardson and other bosses treat employees under their supervision.

SEPTA General Manager Jeff Knueppel is the guy in charge, so he has to lead the way. Knueppel must take action to address the issue of *problem managers*. Biased and incompetent managers and supervisors have to go, so do EEO attorneys who cover up for the sins of managers unfit to do the job.

While the union is willing to work with Knueppel to protect SEPTA from the private profiteers, the General Manager has to understand that we cannot be effective, *if his managers continue to ignore his leadership* in dealing with the problems rank and file union members face on the job, every single day. Let's get real. Our members need relief from the likes of Lou Crocetti.

Mediation Scheduled to Resolve FLSA Lawsuit

The most recent FLSA lawsuit filed against SEPTA over pay for time spent performing vehicle inspections and other required reporting tasks (*Claudio v. SEPTA*) is on track for settlement. Several settlement discussions have been held over the past two months, between representatives of the Authority and the three-person Steering Committee representing the plaintiffs, however, thus far, we have been unable to reach an agreement about the amount of back-pay SEPTA owes.

As a result, we have decided to take the matter to mediation. A mediation session is scheduled for March 22, 2017. We are using the same mediator who helped us resolve the big FLSA case, *Bell v. SEPTA*. The mediator is familiar with the issues and has the confidence of both sides. These are the qualities a mediator needs to bring the parties together to reach a mutually acceptable agreement. After the March 22 mediation session, we will report back on the status of the case.

We Must and We Will