

IMPACT

VOL. 10

NO. 6

FEBRUARY 2014

PRIVATIZATION FAILURE

PARKS DEPT VEHICLES ARE A ROAD HAZARD

A recent article ("NYC Parks Department deemed death trap truck OK for service – more than once) on January 9, 2014 in the *New York Daily News*, brought to light many of the safety issues that Local 246 members deal with on a daily basis. President Joe Colangelo said, however, that the article didn't paint an entirely clear picture.

The New York City Parks Department started to use private contractors in the 1990s to repair a portion of its fleet due to a privatization plan developed by the Giuliani administration. Two Parks Department repair facilities were eventually privatized — one to a location in Brooklyn's Prospect Park and the other in the Bronx. Local 246 at the time fought with the Administration to stop the transfer to a private operator, but was rebuked for our efforts. The Parks Department at this same time began to use private repair shops to do both preventive maintenance and New York State vehicle inspections.

Colangelo said that the vehicle investigated for the newspaper article had a New York State inspection last May at a private shop. The Union has complained many times about the poor quality work of some of the private contractors and their unaccountability.

"This is what happens when the City uses outside vendors. They are in the business of making money and their level of account-

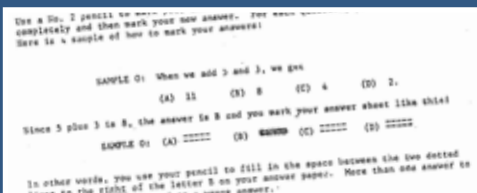


Geoffrey Croft/NYC Parks Advocates

ability is far below the level to which City employees are held. A private contractor's only motive is profit, where ours is public safety and the safety of the operator," Colangelo said.

The Agency has contracts in place for Preventive Maintenance Inspections and Motor Vehicle Inspections with vendors in Manhattan, Queens and Staten Island. Brooklyn and the Bronx|

Continued on page 6



New York City SEIU Local 246

217 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10007

Phone: (212) 233-0616 • Fax: (212) 385-1859

Outside NY: 1-800-903-0246

Web site: www.nyclocal246.org

PRESIDENT JOSEPH A. COLANGELO

VICE PRESIDENT. CHARLES PASTORELLI

SEC./TREAS. RAYMOND S. SCHACOR

RECORDING SECRETARY JAMES GRILLO

SENTINEL PHILIP MAZAL

Union Trustees

John Cox (718) 217-8947

Wayne Esposito. (718) 734-3718

Andrew Weinstein (718) 393-7323/24

Business Agent

Thomas Graziano (212) 233-0616

Shop Stewards

Mark Bardes (718) 818-8723
Sheet Metal Citywide Representative

Jeff Blond (718) 334-9113
Sanitation, 4th Floor CRS

Salvatore Brucculeri. (718) 334-9171
Sanitation, 5th Floor CRS

Joe Buzzell. (917) 501-5590
DOT — MGO Field Representative

Dominick Caracciolo (718) 393-7321/7324
Parks

Edward Clas (718) 546-1308/1725
Correction

Michael Faix (718) 892-5992
Sanitation, Bronx Area

Robert Lucey (718) 571-7248
Fire Dept.

Richard Mazza
Sanitation - Great Kills Area. (718) 984-4803

Jack Minerva. (718) 334-8977
Sanitation — Queensboro

Chris Olsen. (718) 743-6925
Sanitation — Brooklyn & Cioffe Area

Anthony Piazza (718) 649-8256
Sanitation & Cioffe

Stanley Pirpinias (718) 495-5410
Police

Anthony Reyes (718) 784-6538
Fire Dept.

Roy Rodriguez (212) 926-1033
Sanitation

Michael Tsangarakis
DEP (718) 461-2969

Edward Wojcik (646) 210-7932
Dept. of Education

Joseph Yovino (718) 476-7543
Police

Mordechai Ziv (212) 839-2585
DOT

Office Staff

Rosemary Aragona, Maureen A. Byrne, Pat Cruz
NEWSLETTER DESIGN/PRODUCTION:

Marci Rosenblum ♦ RWD Group

(845) 364-0222 ♦ marci@rwdgroup.com

Message from President JOSEPH A. COLANGELO



As usual in February, New Yorkers already have heard the Governor's State of the State address and City residents have heard from the Mayor. Now it's all about anticipation and what the new year will really bring.

Governor Cuomo, in his address, outlined his Administration's goals for the year. He focused on tax relief, education, economic development, public safety and restoring the public trust. What everyone is discussing, however, is the announcement of a \$2 billion budget surplus the Administration predicts it will end the year with. While that seems at first glance like exciting news, what was not mentioned was how this surplus is going to be achieved.

Just three years ago when the Cuomo Administration was faced with a \$10 billion deficit, Mr. Cuomo threatened to lay off ten thousand state workers. To avoid this, state unions settled for a five-year contract that started with a three-year wage freeze and also increased payments to health care premiums. In just three short years, the State is now predicting a surplus. How is this possible?

A recent article in the *New York Times* titled "Cuomo's Talk of a Surplus Leaves Out a Big Caveat" said it this way: "This year, Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo is pulling a budget trick ... on a budget. 'We have gone from a \$10 billion deficit to a \$2

KOMNICK SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS NOW AVAILABLE

Applications for Active members to apply for our brother Lawrence Komnick Memorial Scholarship Award became available on February 1, 2014. Lawrence was an Auto Mechanic who worked at the Police Department and was tragically killed in the performance of a truck inspection. To receive an application for dependent children, Active members should call the Union Office. The scholarship is a one-time only \$1,000 award. Applications must be completed and postmarked by April 30, 2014, and include an official transcript of SAT scores that is signed and verified by the high school. Members' dependent children graduating high school in June 2014 are eligible to apply. The names of those with the top 10 highest SAT scores will be put into a raffle and one name will be picked to receive this scholarship award. Drawing will take place at the May 2014 General Membership Meeting.

billion surplus in just three short years,' Mr. Cuomo, a Democrat seeking re-election in November, declared in his State of the State address this month. Left unexplained was the source of that surplus." The article points to a four-sentence footnote saying that the Governor will achieve this by having lawmakers approve big cuts to planned increases in spending in future budgets. The bag of tricks they use appears endless.

I mention this because I recently attended a forum at the Citizens Union where the presentation was about a report called "Tensions, Trends and Trade-offs." It dealt with the civil service reform put forth by the former Bloomberg Administration, and although it was meant to be a discussion about civil service reform, it turned into more of a dialog about labor relations and the \$2 billion budget surplus that the Bloomberg Administration announced at the end of last year before Mayor Mike left office. I guess \$2 billion is the new lucky number!

One of the panelists, Ronnie Lowenstein, Director of the New York City Independent Budget Office, started her introduction remarks not about the report but about this surplus.

She explained that the \$2 billion surplus from last year was actually getting greater and estimated that when the final figures come in at the end of the fiscal year in June 2014, the surplus will be so large she said it will be a "Surplus-Surplus". I guess in her own way, she was really saying it will be tremendous.

My take on all this is that you can make the numbers look however you want when you're the Governor or the Mayor disseminating the information. During contract talks, they have each claimed poverty, but for election year or legacy talk, they have more money than anyone could ever have imagined.

Union leaders have been aware of these budget gimmicks for years. When it comes time for contract talks, we intend to get what our members deserve and have been waiting for — fair and equitable contracts.

Since Mayor de Blasio took office, we have seen some new Commissioners appointed, including Police Commissioner

Bill Bratton. The one that unions across the City all have the most interest in is the appointment of Bob Linn, Commissioner of Labor Relations, who replaces Jim Hanley. As we all know, when it comes to contract talks, it all starts with OLR. Although Linn has just entered the Office, some labor leaders know him from his past tenure in that same position under former Mayor Ed Koch. As of now, it really is a wait-and-see attitude among most in labor as to what direction he will be given by Mayor de Blasio. Whatever the case, we stand ready to negotiate.

I leave you with some good news, the New York State AFL-CIO just reported New York union membership increased by 145,000, and 24.4% of New York workers belong to a union compared to a national average of 11.3%. New York continues to be a leader, with the largest number of union workers as a percentage of the state workforce. This is something to be proud of; it's no accident that policies in this state are driven by this fact.

"Nearly one out of every seven union members in the country lives in New York," said Mario Cilento, President of the New York State AFL-CIO. "Our members live, work, and vote in every community across this state. Union members represent the hopes, dreams, and values of all New Yorkers."

I couldn't agree more. That's why unions throughout New York City are anxiously waiting for contract negotiations to begin. Mayor de Blasio appears to be in favor of resolving the hundreds of outstanding contracts that remain on the table. As a group, we are hopeful that for the first time in what seems like ages, that negotiations are actually that — two sides sitting at a table with give and take.

Weatherwise, February is turning out to be a rough month. But because our members are doing their jobs so well, the City is able to keep the streets plowed with equipment that is fully functioning. Spring can't get here soon enough. Remember there is no meeting in February. I look forward to seeing you all in March.

MACHINIST TEST UPCOMING REVIEW CLASS

The Union is sponsoring a test prep class for those interested in taking the upcoming Machinist exam. The class is free to members; there is a \$30 fee for non-members payable with money order only. The class is scheduled for Saturday, March 1, 2014, from 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. at St. Stanislaus Church, 61-17 Grand Avenue, Maspeth. Training classes will be held in the school auditorium. Entrance is in the parking lot on 61st Street. Free parking is available in the back of the school. Please bring paper and pen/pencil. Study guide questions are available on the Union's website at www.nyclocal246.org

NO MEETING IN FEBRUARY

Reminder that there is no General Membership Meeting in February 2014. President Joe Colangelo said that if there is an urgent matter that needs to be brought to members' attention, a special notice will be posted on the Union's website or mailed out. Regular monthly meetings will resume in March. Members can continue to visit the Union's web site at www.nyclocal246.org for information.



GOOD & WELFARE

IN MEMORIAM

Joseph De Fio

Ret. Motor Grader Operator — DOT

Edward Johnson

Ret. Auto Mechanic — San

Nicholas Kambouras

Active Auto Mechanic — Fire

Joseph Puoplo

Ret Auto Mechanic — Gen. Services

Eugene Todaro

Ret. Auto Mechanic — San

IN MEMORIAM FAMILY

Joseph Mennella (Wife)

Ret. Auto Mechanic — San

George Kambouras (Brother)

Auto Mechanic Diesel — San

NEW MEMBERS

Francisco Antonio

Auto Service Worker — Police

Juan Levaggi

Auto Service Worker — Police

Mukesh Milton

Auto Mechanic Diesel — San

Marek Serafin

Sheet Metal Worker — DHS

Juan Vargas

Auto Service Worker — Police

LET US KNOW:

If you have news you'd like to share with other members, send it to the Union Office for the publication in our newsletter. Birthdays. Graduations. Trips. Honors. Community Service. New babies. It's all good news to share with other members. Be sure to include photos, as well as daytime and evening phone numbers where you can be reached if we have questions.

RETIRING MEMBERS

Michael Debari

Auto Mechanic — DOT

Lawrence DeRosa

Auto Mechanic — San

John Ellams

Machinist — DOT

Glenn Holden

Auto Mechanic — San

Oliver Knott

Auto Mechanic — San

Frank Pantaleone

Auto Mechanic — San

Stewart Siegel

Auto Mechanic — San

Andrew Sekelsky

Machinist — DEP

Peter Watral

Sheet Metal Worker — Police

REPORTING ILL:

Ronald Bazil

Auto Mechanic — Fire

**VISIT THE
UNION'S WEBSITE
www.nyclocal246.org**

for the most
up-to-date information

UPDATE YOUR RECORDS

FOR 2014

It's important for our office to have correct information for each member. Please take a few minutes to call the Union Office at (212) 233-0616 to advise us of any of the following changes:

- Name Changes
- Domestic Partner
- Spouse's Name
- Marital Status
- Newborn
- Title/Department Changes
- Address Changes
- Home and work telephone numbers
- Children in College
- Retiree Status
- Compensation
- Off Payroll
- Termination
- Resignation
- Deaths
- Reporting Ill

New members **must** send us a copy of your marriage certificate and/or your dependent(s) birth Certificates. Members who are divorced must send us a copy of your divorce papers. You will be responsible for any outstanding bills your spouse/domestic partner use that they are not entitled to.

2014 UNION MEMBERSHIP CARDS — Active members received their 2014 cards with their January newsletter. Retirees will get theirs in a separate mailing once their dues have been paid. Any active member who did not find a card with their January IMPACT newsletter should contact the Union office.

NEWS & NOTES

RETIREE DUES FOR 2014 — Retirees' annual dues for 2014 were due to the Union office by January 31, 2014. If you have not already done so, please send your check or money order payable to NYC Local 246, 217 Broadway Suite 501, New York, NY 10007 in the amount of \$60. The amount is nominal and just covers the per capita and dues mailings.

SUMMARY PLAN DESCRIPTION FOR ACTIVE MEMBERS — The Active Welfare Fund mailed out the Summary Plan Description (SPD) that was required because of the recent benefits changes, such as removal of the prescription drug cap and changes to pediatric dental and eyeglass coverage. If you are an Active member and haven't received one, please contact the Union office.

FUNDS EXTEND COVERAGE TO ACTIVE MEMBERS' CHILDREN UP TO AGE 26 — Local 246 has extended coverage for the children of active members up until the dependent children turn 26. However, active members must enroll these dependent children within 31 days of reaching age 19 or at the time they lose benefits from their own or spouse/domestic partner benefits. Again, there is a 31-day time limit to enroll dependent children for extended coverage. If you miss the time limit, you will have to wait until the following January 1 to enroll. Any active member who has questions about the extended coverage should contact the Union office prior to their dependent turning 19 in order not to miss out.

COLLEGE LETTERS DUE BY FEBRUARY 15 FOR SPRING SEMESTER — Retirees with dependents ages 19 to 23 attending college full time, must submit proof each semester – fall and spring. A letter that is signed dated and bears the seal of the College Registrar, stating that the dependent is a full time, matriculated student is required as proof of eligibility for Welfare Benefits. Prescription claims for dependents that letters have expired will not be honored. They will be terminated.

SEIU 2013-2014 SCHOLARSHIPS — SEIU is offering 51 college scholarships each year. Only members of SEIU and their children are eligible to apply. Application information is available at www.seiu.org/mbe/scholarships or by contacting the Scholarship Program at the SEIU Scholarship Programs, c/o Scholarship Program Administrators Inc., P.O. Box 23737, Nashville, TN 37202. You may also call (615) 320-3149.

WEBSITE REDESIGN — Local 246 updated the website design to make it easier for members to navigate and to add some new features. Members are encouraged to visit the website at www.nyclocal246.org on a regular basis for the most up-to-date and timely information, especially during months where there are no General Membership meetings.

ONLY MEDICARE-ELIGIBLE RETIREES ENROLLED IN APPROVED HMOs — NYC Local 246 will prepare the second half of 2013's reimbursement payments for those Medicare eligible. Retirees currently enrolled and/or who have opted to purchase their drug rider through deductions in their pension checks. In order to receive reimbursement from the Retirees Welfare Fund, eligible retirees must forward to the Union Office copies of their pension stubs for the period of July 1-December 31, 2013.

DISCOUNT THEATER TICKETS — Are you up for rip roaring comedy, thrilling music, dance and exciting Broadway shows? The Theatre Development Fund (TDF) is offering discounts of up to 70% for members. Joining is easy. Go to www.tdf.org. Then click on TDF Membership. TDF membership is your ticket to the performing arts at affordable prices. Our members enjoy access to hundreds of Broadway, Off Broadway, music and dance productions each year for only \$9 to \$45 a ticket. We invite you to see if you qualify to join the more than 90,000 theatre lovers who get the best deals through TDF.

LOCATE POSSIBLE UNCLAIMED FUNDS — To see if you have unclaimed funds in New York State, go to the following link and type in your name — <https://ouf.osc.state.ny.us/ouf/>

CITIZENS RX PREFERRED FORMULARY — The 2014 Citizens RX National Preferred Formulary is now available on the Local 246 website at www.nyclocal246.org. This list contains the most commonly prescribed drugs. It represents an abbreviated version of the drug list (formulary) that is at the core of your prescription-drug benefit plan. The list is not all-inclusive and does not guarantee coverage. In addition to using this list, you are encouraged to ask your doctor to prescribe generic drugs when-ever appropriate. An asterisk next to a drug signifies it is subject to non formula status when a generic is available. Not all the drugs are covered by all prescription-drug benefit programs. Check your benefit materials for the specific drugs covered and co-payments for your prescription drug benefit program. For specific question about your coverage, please call the phone number printed on your ID card. If you do not have internet access, or cannot download the list, please contact the Union office at (212) 233-0616.

COMPARE DRUG PRICES — Visit New York's drug comparison website at www.rx.nyhealth.gov for the most up to date information on drug prices and where you can find the best bargains.

DO NOT CALL REGISTRY — Tired of annoying marketing phone calls? You can register both your personal cell phone and land line numbers with the National Do Not Call Registry, either online at www.donotcall.gov or by calling toll-free 1-888-382-1222 from the telephone number you wish to register. Registrations become effective within 31 days of signing up and are active for five years. There is no cut-off date or deadline for registrations.

LOCAL 246

INCOME TAX BENEFIT

Wendel-Walowitz LLC once again will be administering the Income Tax Benefit for members this filing season. They are available to prepare your tax returns either by mail or at one of the following locations (by appointment only):

Manhattan

420 Lexington Avenue, Suite 2737
New York, NY 10170-0002

Long Island

68 South Service Road, Suite 100
Melville, NY 11747

Queens

Kowalski Post 4
61 -57 Maspeth Avenue
Maspeth, NY 11378

To facilitate the preparation of your tax returns please remember:

- Make an appointment for all locations through our Manhattan Office 212.682.6003, ext. 1, and identify yourself as a Local 246 member.
- Please bring a copy of your 2012 Income Tax return if it was not prepared by our office.

- If you are claiming new dependents, please bring their social security number.
- If you would like your refund directly deposited into your bank account, please bring the account number and bank routing number, or a check.

Long Island (additional dates will be added as need arises):

- Wednesday February 26
- Saturday March 1
- Monday March 10
- Wednesday March 19
- Saturday April 5

Queens (additional dates will be added as need arises):

- Saturday, February 22
- Saturday, March 8, 22

Tax returns must be filed electronically when available, and is included in the co-payment. If you choose not to file electronically, there will be a \$50 fee to cover the penalty imposed to our firm by New York State.

Please call 212.682.6003 x1 to book an appointment or if you have any questions. We look forward to speaking and meeting with you.

PRIVATIZATION FAILURE PARKS DEPT VEHICLES ARE A ROAD HAZARD

Continued from page 1

have been under contract with various vendors since 1995. The contract for these types of inspections for Manhattan alone for two years was at a cost of roughly \$1 million.

"It's no wonder the City administration is crying poverty. The purpose of a Preventive Maintenance Inspection (PMI) is to inspect and identify any problems with vehicles and make necessary repairs. PMIs are performed at intervals of 3,000 and 10,000 miles.

"The current system has failed. Both the Preventive Maintenance and Motor Vehicle Inspections should be done by City employees, then no City worker would be in jeopardy of riding around in the type of vehicles described in the story," Colangelo said.

Another problem is that the Agency is driven by out-of-service percentages, rather than what the vehicle fully needs to make it road worthy.

"What this all boils down to is that vehicles not safe to be driven should be fixed or taken out of service. The Parks Department must put a policy in place so that vehicles are inspected by trained professionals who have safety first and foremost, not by businesses looking to make a buck. The problems with the Parks vehicle identified in the *Daily News* article are unfortunately not an anomaly. They have happened before and will continue to happen in the future until this issue is addressed once and for all," Colangelo said.

"Members of Local 246 are the most qualified and talented Mechanics and Machinists anywhere in the industry. Vehicles maintained by members of our Union are in far better condition than those maintained off site. It's time that the City realizes privatization plans do not work and are not in the best interest of anyone involved," Colangelo said.

PENNSYLVANIA ATTEMPTS TO WEAKEN UNION SUPPORT

Union members in Pennsylvania held a mass demonstration inside the state capital to protest a Republican effort to strip public employee unions of their right to have member dues collected through payroll deduction. The protesters were clear that they see this Republican effort as just the beginning of an attempt to destroy unions and workers' rights in the state.

After seeing labor union rights erode in Wisconsin and Michigan, labor union members from across Pennsylvania took over the state Capitol Rotunda recently to say they will not let that happen here.

More than a thousand firefighters, police officers, boilermakers, sheet metal workers, teachers, electrical workers and others came out in force to ward off what they see as the start of an all-out attack on workers' rights.

Legislation has been introduced in the House and Senate that would bar unions from being able to negotiate the collection of dues through payroll deduction. This would force unions to collect dues directly from members, which is anticipated would weaken union support.

But the speeches made by various union members and labor supporters made it clear that they see these bills as part of a bigger movement to take away workers' rights and silence labor's voice in Pennsylvania.

"We are seeing this more and more across the country," said Local 246 President Joe Colangelo. "This is not something we will let happen in New York, and I think we have made that very clear to political leaders at all levels."

"The bill looks to remove the administrative burden placed on public and private entities for processing and collecting and paying union dues," said Gov. Tom Corbett spokesman Jay Pagni. "It has nothing to do about squashing worker rights whatsoever."

Colangelo said that unions have utilized dues check offs for years and that the only reason for legislators to try and undo the system is to undermine unions and strip them of their power in the state.

"Having to collect dues from members directly would be an incredibly cumbersome process, when the one that's in place right now works so well in every state," he said.



We Put Members First

NORTHEASTERN ENGINEERS FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

"NO FEE" Mortgage Loan Program

- Application Fee \$0
- Appraisal Fee \$0
- Commitment Fee \$0
- Credit Report Fee \$0
- Loan Origination Fee \$0
- Loan Points Fee \$0
- Document Prep Fee \$0
- Underwriting Fee \$0

**Rates as Low
as 3.50% APR**

SAVE \$1000s



PHONE: 718.847.0202

115-06 Myrtle Avenue
Richmond Hill, NY 11418

For information about our Credit Union visit

www.nefcuny.org

No Points...No Fees...No Kidding



Borrower responsible for third party fees

ADVERTISEMENT

NEW YORK CITY LOCAL 246 • SERVICE EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION, AFL-CIO

IMPACT

SEIU Local 246 ~ 217 Broadway, Suite 501 ~ New York, NY 10007

Prsrft First Class Mail
US Postage
PAID
Albany, NY
Permit #370

REMEMBER OUR TROOPS & PRAY FOR THEIR SAFETY

VISITING WITH THE MEMBERS



On a recent trip to Albany for the Governor's State of the State Address, President Joe Colangelo (left photo) visited the Ashokan Reservoir Shop and met new Auto Mechanic Noel Amundsen, who replaced Joseph Wisneski, who recently retired.

"Reaching out to members outside of New York City is important so they don't feel out of the loop," Colangelo said. "We also want to make sure that any problems or issues are being addressed in a timely fashion."

Also, Vice President Charles Pastorelli stopped by Queensboro College to say Happy New Year to Auto Mechanic Oscar Perez (right photo) and asked how he made out at the College during the January snowstorm. Perez is the only Mechanic at Queensboro repairing all the equipment.

