

The Local Line

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Northwest Illinois Area Local

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Update by: Jackie Engelhart

Carol Stream Clerks - Don't Be Scared into Bidding on 6-Day Jobs

I wanted to get this out sooner but had to work on the grievances first. I have been hearing that some Clerks will bid on these illegal six day jobs because they think they are better off with a bid. This is exactly the trap management is setting for you so make sure you know what you are doing and why. There is only one reason to bid on these jobs and that is if you want to work six days per week at the straight-time rate. These bids were posted to see how many Clerks would bid on them. Even CS management knows they cannot force Clerks into these jobs so they are posting these illegal six day schedules to see how many will bid on them because they think they have to have a bid. Do not be fooled by this ploy which is a new low for management at any facility I have dealt with. If you do not bid you will continue to work your current schedule.

Do Not Reward Them...

I sat in when Mr. Colao and Mr. Johnson met with the victims of this cynical and inhumane action. Mr. Colao even said some employees may want to bid on these jobs just to have a bid. That is what they want, because they cannot force anyone into these jobs. Senior management at CS is only too willing to violate the contract and to stick it to the Clerks who staff their FSS machines and their tour 1 DBCS. While they enjoy a 5 day workweek with holidays, etc, they want the Clerks (grunts) who work nights staffing their machines to work six days per week on straight-time. But they are not stupid and that is why they say they will keep the unencumbered Clerks in their exact same schedules if they do not choose to bid. They had the audacity to say they will keep them in the same schedules for 180 days so after 180 days they can change their schedules again, in time for the changes to come in March of 2012.

A Smooth Presentation

I listened to Mr. Johnson talk to the affected Clerks on 10-3-11 and if I did not know why we were there I would have thought he was giving a Town Hall meeting on the future of the Postal Service. He talked about how other plants were closing and how he was going to bring more mail into CS. Only at the end did he mention the six day jobs that he said other plants will be posting. (Not yet) He did a very good job of making it sound like he was posting six day jobs to provide job security. After he finished I told the Clerks the six day jobs are illegal and management is violating our new contract. He responded that he is "confident" he can do this. PMG Donahoe obviously has no respect for the contract he signed and has generated 8 disputes on the NTFT Memo alone. The PMG and the CS PM are violating clear contract language that protects our members in 200 man year offices from six day weeks just to save a few dollars. **A dispute has been filed, grievances to follow...**

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Special points of interest:

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Palatine Posting 10/4 Jobs...

Plant Manager Chuck Sciorba informed me that Palatine would be abolishing all 2250 Automation jobs and posting 40 8pm start 10/4 NTFT jobs in tour 1 Automation. These jobs are legal per the new contract as management can post up to 50% NTFT jobs in the plants as long as the jobs are at least 40 hours and have no fewer than two consecutive off days. That means these 10/4 jobs are contractual and Palatine can assign unencumbered Clerks into them if no one bids on them and they become residuals. The CS six-day jobs are illegal so management knows they cannot assign unencumbered into them. That is why we encourage CS Clerks not to bid on the illegal NTFT six day jobs but caution the abolished 2250 Palatine Clerks to understand that if you do not bid you could be placed into a 10/4 residual vacancy. Palatine is also posting 21 tour 1 Automation jobs with 32 hour five day schedules. They can assign any of the 17 PTR Clerks who were converted to NTFT on 8-27-11 into these jobs if they become residual. CS did not have any PTR's in mail processing but had a few in Data Collection and the Branch. I asked Plant Manager Sciorba why post 10/4 jobs on tour 1 now when senior management states that mail processing schedules will change in March of 2012 to an 8am start for Automation and a noon start for DPS processing? He said management thinks they can save money by posting the NTFT jobs now and the 10/4 jobs will be used to get a head start on the heavy towns and cut overtime. Palatine is showing consideration for the employees and following the contract, but CS is not.

No "General Bid" in Contract

USPS plans to change overnight one-day service for first class mail to a two-day service. The service change will allow management to close plants by giving them an extra day to transport and process the mail at the remaining plants. The only positive for employees is that management plans to expand operations in the remaining plants and to work mail on tour 2 again. For those with tour 2 retreat rights you will be first in line to go back. At the meetings Chuck referred to the possibility of a "General Bid" but the contract does not provide for the general reposting of all bids in a facility. That means only those jobs that must be changed or reposted would be affected.

Palatine CFS to Close 11-5-11...

The Palatine CFS unit was to be closed on 3-5-11 with the mail consolidated to South Suburban. The move has been delayed many times but the 11-5-11 date has not been changed so far. I spoke with South Suburban Local President James Malone on 10-17-11 and he said he does not think South Sub. can handle the Palatine mail now. The CFS closure will trigger an impact due to the loss of that mail but I do not anticipate any Clerks being excessed out of the facility. There has been a steady attrition of Clerks retiring at Palatine and more mail will be coming into the plants that are not closed in the coming 2012 plant consolidations. There are Mail Handler residual vacancies at Palatine but Lakeland has offered some of those jobs to impacted Clerks in the 600 AOs. I have asked that management keep some of those jobs for the CFS impact but by 11-5-11 more Clerks will have retired and the impact should be small if at all.

AO - NTFT Grievances Filed

We have filed grievances on the placement of newly converted Part-Time Regulars and Part-Time Flexible Clerks into assignments of less than 40 hours on 8-27-11. A national dispute has been filed.

Election Lawsuit Dismissed

On 10-4-11 we were notified by our attorney that the lawsuit filed against me by Mary Corner had been dismissed by the Court. Mary had filed suit to compel me to relinquish the position of President to her based on a letter from election committee member and Chairperson Maria Porch-Clark. The Court ruled that the law does not permit an individual to file a lawsuit regarding a union election, because only the Department of Labor has the authority to do so. Mary Corner should know this because our attorney stated that she has filed two lawsuits against the DOL when they dismissed her election appeals, and she appealed both of those Court decisions. As the attorney stated, Mary is familiar with the legal system. Since the membership authorized up to \$5,000 to defend against this lawsuit we instructed our attorney to file a motion to require Mary to repay the Local for our legal fees. Fiduciary responsibility requires us to attempt to recover the fees.

In Memoriam-Ben Whiteurst

It is not possible to mention the passing of every union brother and sister who has left us, but we try to acknowledge the passing of current and former union officials. Ben was a lifelong union member who served as an officer/steward under President Frederick Parker back at North Suburban Facility. Ben passed on 10-6-11 and he will be missed by family and friends, and his extended postal family.

