



TEAMSTERS LOCAL 727

Representing nearly 10,000
hardworking men and women
throughout the Chicagoland area

John T. Coli
Secretary-Treasurer

John T. Coli Jr.
President

MAY 26, 2016 | FUNERAL NEWS

TEAMSTERS STAND UP FOR FUNERAL WORKERS AT SCI SHAREHOLDERS MEETING

In Houston, Union Reps Denounce Corporation's Poor Business Practices

Teamsters representatives on May 11 called out funeral industry giant Service Corporation International's poor business practices and called on its Board of Directors to take action during the company's annual shareholders meeting in Houston.

Teamsters Local 727 staff attorney Jayna Brown personally addressed shareholders and the company's full Board of Directors, including CEO Thomas L. Ryan, who was conducting the meeting.

In the nearly two years since negotiations began on a new contract for funeral directors and drivers at four SCI d/b/a Alderwoods funeral homes, the company has used delay tactics while seeking to limit wages, decrease overtime, enforce irregular work hours and unilaterally fire workers without just cause. Federal mediation began in October 2014, and since then, no progress has been made. The National Labor Relations Board has agreed with the union that the company has been engaging in unfair labor practices and ordered a remedy in favor of the union.

SCI also locked out 59 funeral directors and drivers from August 2013 to January 2014 at 16 corporate-owned Chicago-area funeral homes. The contract covering those workers is set to expire again on June 30, 2016.

"The company's actions during the 2013 lockout cost shareholders more money and exposed them to a greater liability, while drastically reducing revenue it could take years to cover, if at all. Instead of avoiding future liability, SCI is repeating its mistakes by abandoning better business practices with its Alderwoods funeral home group in Chicago and by radically reducing employees' just cause rights that employees have enjoyed for years," Brown said. "So I ask, does SCI even want a contract with Teamsters Local 727? And if so, then why are they insisting on stripping away the rights of their employees?"

SCI operates more than 2,000 funeral homes and cemeteries in North America, many of which still bear the names of families that independently owned them for generations.



TEAMSTERS LOCAL 727

Representing nearly 10,000
hardworking men and women
throughout the Chicagoland area

John T. Coli
Secretary-Treasurer

John T. Coli Jr.
President

The International Brotherhood of Teamsters also sponsored an equity retention proposal at the shareholders meeting. The Teamsters called on the board to adopt a policy that requires senior executives to retain a significant percentage of shares acquired through equity compensation programs until reaching normal retirement age or terminating employment with the company. Ultimately, the proposal did not pass.

The Teamsters have sent representatives to SCI's shareholders meeting for the last three years.

“Employers cannot be allowed to boost their bottom lines on the backs of working families. Companies as big and profitable as SCI need to be held accountable to their investors, their customers and their workers, especially when making reckless decisions that jeopardize the livelihoods of all three,” said John Coli Jr., President of Local 727. “The Teamsters are not afraid to stand up to this corporate bully, and we vow to continue fighting for our members and the families they serve.”

Teamsters Local 727 has represented funeral industry workers for more than 75 years and currently represents about 500 funeral directors, embalmers and livery chauffeurs in the Chicago area.