



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 11, 2016 | FUNERAL NEWS

FEDERAL COURT JUDGE RULES IN UNION'S FAVOR AGAINST FUNERAL EMPLOYER

A federal court judge has ruled in the union's favor by determining that Olson Burke-Sullivan Funeral Home and Cremation Society are a single employer and are bound to the current FDSA collective bargaining agreement with Teamsters Local 727.

Additionally, U.S. District Judge Jorge L. Alonso determined that the prior FDSA (Funeral Directors Services Association) Grievance Board decision is effective and ordered OBS/Cremation Society to abide by that decision.

"All along we knew this employer was in the wrong, and we are pleased that justice has been served," said John Coli Jr., President of Local 727. "We sincerely hope that the employer follows the judge's orders, so we can finally put this issue to rest."

In 2013, Olson Burke-Sullivan Funeral Home made an untimely and unlawful attempt to repudiate its compliance agreement with the union. The union filed a grievance and promptly referred it to the FDSA grievance board.

Shortly thereafter, OBS terminated funeral director Douglas Klein, and the union filed another grievance challenging his wrongful termination. The employer refused to meet with the union to process the grievance.

The FDSA Grievance board ruled on May 2, 2014, that OBS is still bound by its compliance agreement and the FDSA agreement. The Grievance Board also ordered the employer to meet with the union to process the wrongful termination grievance of Klein.

Rather than comply with the Grievance Board's decision, OBS/Cremation Society decided to sue the union in federal court over the issue. However, in his March 31 decision, the federal court judge found no merit with the funeral home's complaint, entered judgment in favor of the union, and dismissed the funeral company's civil case.

"It is unfortunate that the employer insisted on wasting everyone's time, money and patience on this issue," Coli said. "This is just another example of the lengths this local union will go in order to fight for our members' rights."

Local 727 represents about 400 Chicago-area funeral employees covered by the FDSA contract.