

# Weekly Word

Monroe County Federation of Social Workers, IUE-CWA 381

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John Vasko

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## Privatization or Entrepreneurship

I know we're all a little jumpy about privatization of our jobs, but I think this example identifies an enterprising member of the Monroe County workforce.

This week has been a rough one for the people at St Paul, especially the women. It seems when the County decided to take over maintenance of some buildings, including St Paul, there was no plan to make sure there was enough toilet paper or hand towels for workers to use. The County thought that the prior company, Atkell, was going to leave the supplies they had brought for the building. Unfortunately, that was not the case.

Early in the week, it became apparent that zero to one roll of TP per stall was not going to be adequate, and Perry Wheeler and I got inundated with calls about this situation. This perplexed Perry 'cause emailing only him was not the "official procedure" causing him to have to respond to all of these folks letting them know what the proper procedure is.

Fortunately for the workers at St Paul, the guy in charge, Pieter Smeenk, was advised of this situation and got things resolved by Wednesday afternoon. But one clever soul who brought the much sought after goodies took it upon himself to make a sign advertising the product for sale...10 cents a sheet that was discounted if you showed your Union card. At least he is a Union employee.

Someone at Labor-Management offered up the *Weekly Word* to be used in an emergency, but since people at St Paul get this newsletter digitally...well, never mind. While I poke a little fun at the County this was not a laughing matter for the workers involved.

## The Real Story

The County and the workers did get caught with their pants down, so to speak, in the transition to take over maintenance of these buildings. Pieter was able to come to our Labor-Management meeting yesterday as we were addressing the lack of supplies and cleaning at St Paul.

The County had expected Atkell to leave the supplies when they stopped doing maintenance last Friday. It took a little time to get the new supplier in place, but we should be well stocked on a continuous basis from now on.

There is a new cleaning crew that will be at St Paul. There will be someone there from 7am to 4pm daily

who is responsible for things that come up during the day, including shoveling and salting sidewalks. The regular snow removal and salting for the parking lots will continue with the same contractor through this season.

The actual cleaning crews show up in late afternoon and will work until late at night taking care of trash, cleaning rest rooms, and all the things that Atkell used to do. Pieter asks for some patience until this crew gets their routine. He hopes they will be in full swing in a couple of weeks.

Meanwhile, keep forwarding your building issues according to the "proper procedure" to keep Pieter informed of what needs/deficiencies there are. This is important, since the ability to shift more crew members to take care of a building is based on documented need. The Director should have already assigned an onsite point person for complaints. If you don't know who that is, be sure to ask your supervisor/administrator. The other building eventually affected by this change is City Place.



## Membership Meeting/Vote

Wednesday 2/16

5:30pm

Cooperative Extension Auditorium

249 Highland Avenue

### Agenda:

- Marketing Presentation
- Financial Report
- Discussion and vote to buy marketing services
- President's report
- Contract update



*light refreshments available*

