

DAILY NEWS

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Union for New York City's doormen, handymen gets contract, averts strike

By Ginger Adams Otis

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Services Employees International Union 32 BJ, or SEIU 32BJ, agreed to a tentative four-year deal that includes a 11.3% raise for doormen and handymen who work in residential and commercial buildings.



SPENCER PLATT/GETTY IMAGES

New York City's iconic doormen, like this man, won't be going on strike after they, and the city's handymen, agreed to a tentative four-year contract.

The union representing doormen and handymen reached a tentative agreement Friday with the Realty Advisory Board, averting a possible strike that would have affected thousands of city residents.

Services Employees International Union 32 BJ agreed to a four-year deal that includes a 11.3% raise for doormen, supers, handymen and porters who work in residential buildings.

If ratified by the SEIU 32BJ membership, the deal will cover 30,000 union workers in 3,300 buildings across the five boroughs.

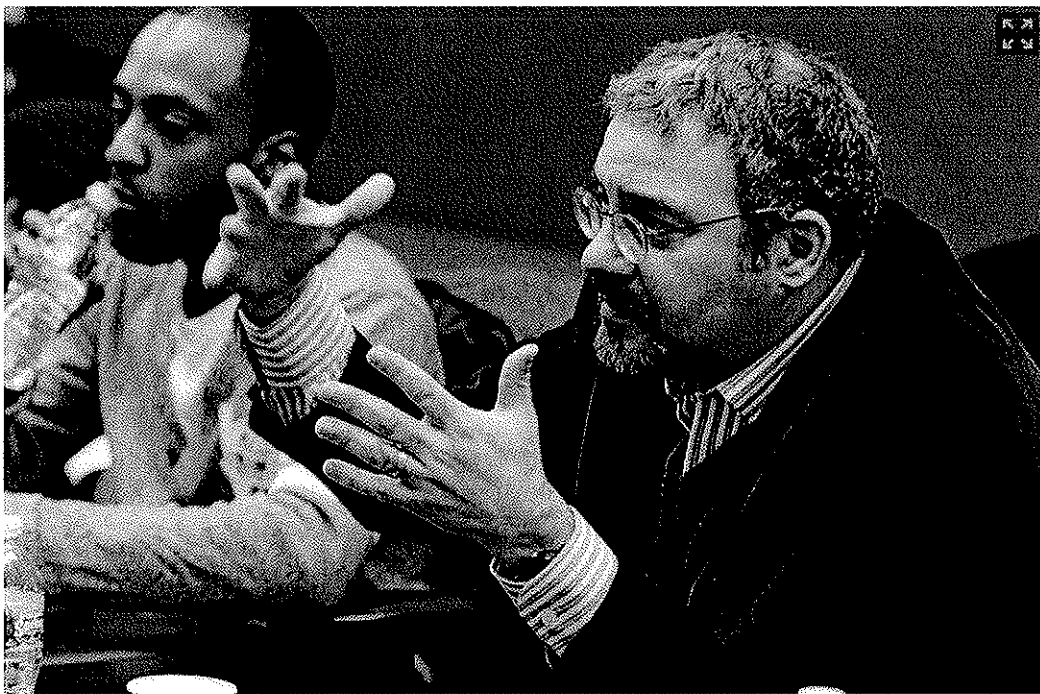
The tentative agreement contained no givebacks and workers' pensions and health care packages are protected, the union said.

"We are proud to say that we have made it a little easier for 30,000 New Yorkers to make this city their home," said Hector Figueroa, president of SEIU 32BJ. "In a city that has become increasingly unequal, this contract will keep 30,000 building workers on a pathway to the middle class, which will also benefit the communities in which they live."

SEIU 32BJ's members are the highest-paid residential building service workers in the country. The tentative agreement includes a wage increase of 2.7% each year for four years.

That will bring the average wage for a New York City doorman from \$44,389 to \$49,402 by the contract's end.

The union's generous health care package - with no employee contributions - remains intact, as does its defined benefit pension plan.



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SEIU 32BJ, whose President Hector Figueroa is pictured, has agreed to a contract to its New York City doorman and handyman members, keeping them from striking.

"We are pleased to have reached a tentative agreement well before the contract deadline," said Howard Rothschild, president of RAB, which negotiated with the union.

"We have once again shown how labor and management can sit down and work together with a shared purpose and find common ground. This unprecedented early contract will allow workers,

building owners and New Yorkers to go about their normal routines without having to worry about what will happen over the holidays," he added.

The contract was also praised by industry associates.

Steven Spinola, president of the Real Estate Board of New York, said the agreement was "mutually beneficial" and thanked both sides for their work.

"I'm pleased this means there will be no disruption of service for the people we serve," Spinola said.

He touted the tentative deal as a model for other labor negotiations.

"The best evidence of a fair and solid agreement is when both sides make concessions, as happened here," he said.