

Granite City Mayor Parkinson Says He, Union and Others Will Fight For Jobs At Steel Plant

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ST. LOUIS – Granite City’s Mayor Mike Parkinson, Local Steelworkers 1899 Union President Dan Simmons, and area legislators have not given up on the plight of jobs that maybe be lost at the Granite City Works Plant.

An announcement was made Tuesday by the United States Steel Corporation that it had entered a non-binding letter of intent with SunCoke Energy, a raw processing and handling company. Mayor Parkinson said as many as 1,000 jobs could be lost at the Granite City Works Plant if this plan was completed. He pointed out that right now this is a “non-binding letter of intent” to SunCoke.

Parkinson said the binding letter is a commitment to talk and not a binding sale or contract.

“No deal has been made at this time,” he said. “There is still a lot of fight left in the union, the city, and legislators to keep this business here,” he said. “Senator Duckworth will work to make sure if they leave they don’t leave a rough belt but return it to where it can be developed. I am determined to force them to clean this mess if they bring in a new business and shut down the plant.”

Mayor Parkinson said only 350 of the jobs presently at the plant are people who live in the 62040 zip code, and this is more of a regional issue. If the mill closes and the new business opens they will still pay us lottery tickets but it could hurt business, where they buy gas, grocery shop, lottery tickets, etc.

SunCoke would acquire two blast furnaces at Granite City Works. The plan would be to build a 2-million-ton granulated pig iron production facility.

United States Steel said SunCoke would supply U.S. Steel access to 100 percent of pig-iron production for the next decade once the venue is live.

United Steelworkers rallied on Saturday, August 20, after the announcement. It was supposed to be a rally but because of the announcement employees wanted to rally instead, Mayor Parkinson said.

The United Steelworkers made the following statement about the plan that could lead to 1,000 jobs lost at the plant:

“In its announcement regarding Granite City’s future, the company callously failed to mention a word about the massive job loss or impact the decision will have on a skilled and loyal workforce, their families, or the community.

“It is another tale for a long string of betrayals by the company, which now has permanently closed nearly two-thirds of assets it acquired from National Steel along with other acquisitions.”