

EXECUTIVE REPORT – LABOUR RELATIONS/OFFICE UPDATE

June 23 2020

Greetings,

Over the course of 2019, we have experienced many challenges and changes in our work environment. The impact of COVID 19 has impacted all of us in a myriad of different ways. This new world has changed how we work, limited our ability to be together and shifted us away from gathering on campus. While this is our currently reality, it won't be forever and we know we will be together again.

During the past year, I have worked hard to support the membership, provide timely responses to questions and advocate on behalf of each of you, individually and on many committees. I am proud of our community and proud to be your labour relations officer/lead shop steward. I am continually humbled by your kind words of support, encouragement and the commitment you bring to our community each and every day.

This report is intended to capture a snapshot of the projects completed, underway and pending.

Office

We re-arranged the Union office to make the space more functional to support multiple people working at the same time. This has allowed for better use of the space. We put our paper records back into storage to free up floor space and to allow for the scanning project to begin. Unfortunately, workload is still impacting my ability to scan older documents but I remain committed to working through the boxes and digitizing our records.

A new printer was installed and we have faster scanning capabilities than were previously in place. Two laptops were purchased: one for myself to take to meetings and one for the Secretary Treasurer. Little did we know at the time of purchase, the laptops would allow us to continue business continuity when COVID 19 hallowed out our buildings and we transitioned to remote work!

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Labour Relations

I have worked hard over the last year to solidify good labour relations with our Employer and we have experienced gains as a result of those efforts.

While we do not always agree, we engage with respect and a mutual commitment to resolve concerns. As such, all grievances filed over the last year and a half have been resolved without needing to go to arbitration. This is a savings to the local, however, please know, we are prepared to utilize the arbitration process, if and when needed. The impact to our finances is not a driving force behind whether we pursue arbitration or not. It is the strength of the case and the scope of the breach of our Collective Agreement.

Bargaining

I was elected Bargaining Chair for the recent round of negotiations. The newly ratified Collective Agreement represents a 'good deal' for this round and some of the proposals we brought forward will be carried forward to the table in two years. Yes, we will be back at the bargaining table in two years time!

As you are also aware, we voted to ratify our new Collective Agreement, via a managed service by Simply Voting. While this took a significant amount of work to prepare, I was thrilled to report we ratified via 400 votes cast! That is the highest voter participation the membership has experienced to date.

COVID 19 Weekly Meetings: College and Unions

Every Wednesday morning, I participate in a College Leadership meeting to discuss issues, concerns and pose questions for response to the College leadership group. These meetings are our opportunity to ask questions, challenge assumptions and seek clarity on behalf of CUPE, CCFA and BCGEU.

Our Safe Re-opening must and will adhere to WorkSafe Guidelines and respect our right to a safe work environment.

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CUPE BC Libraries Committee

I am a continuing representative to the CUPE BC Libraries Committee and I am very proud of the advocacy this committee does within the Province. CUPE BC is supporting the Summer Reading Program for the 2nd time.

We also began a campaign to support the safe re-opening of our public libraries. This campaign is circulating on social media but if you'd like to know more, please feel free to contact me for information. Libraries are the last bastion of equal access to information. The longer our public libraries remain closed, the less access is available to those who need it.

Not everyone has the ability to access information technology and the service public libraries provide, as well as our academic libraries, can be and often is the determinant of whether someone can apply for a job or complete course work.

Other Committees

While bargaining was underway, we did not convene our Labour Management Committee but we did still receive all purchase orders for Contracted Service requests. Additionally, it is my role to support all other executive members and assist with their workload and help develop projects. This means I participate, guide and direct projects that executive members are working on. As well, I will sit in on any committee, as needed, if an executive member is unavailable.

It is an honour to serve this community and I look forward to supporting each of you, as needed, over the coming year.

On the following few pages, I have attached notes from a CUPE BC All President's Call. These notes provide a snap shot of what work is occurring elsewhere in our Province and the advocacy CUPE BC/CUPE National are engaged in at this time.

In Solidarity,

Erynne Grant | Labour Relations Officer

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CUPE BC ALL PRESIDENT'S CALL

Start: via ZOOM: 6:30pm Tuesday June 23rd: 6:36pm

Joined by Mark Hancock, CUPE National President
120+ participants as of 8pm: all but 3 on Zoom: members, regional, staff reps

no formal agenda: key purpose is to check in: Meena will provide regional report, Mark Hancock update from National.

1. Indigenous Welcome: Paul Faro, equality statement read by: Karen Renaletta

Paul Faro: Aware of mental health impact in this environment, importance of OHS reps, adapting to technology, CUPE BC office still 'open'. In office almost full time. Spoke with Dr Henry in Victoria

Racism: highlighting concern: troubling rise: anti Black Asian Indigenous: no place for this in our country or our union. Firm action is needed and prepared to do work to fight this.

Lay offs in Municipalities, 19,000, Libraries: 1936: top of mind: municipalities are not opening during phase 2 as outlined they can. Campaign is underway: petition municipalities and local leaders. Post Secondary sector concerns for the Fall: enrollment: lay offs are not looking good but will do everything we can to protect people.

K-12 winding down, libraries are even more important to help kids with access to services.

Recreation Services: sector hit very hard, building a platform to launch for rec centres. Private systems opening up but not the public. Need unionized rec centres up too.

Canadian Labour Congress: launched a campaign: petitioning software for municipal funding

Select Committee on Govt Serv/Finances: made a presentation regarding impact to assist in budget development; 3 areas: Post Sec: increase funding: currently 43% Govt funding: was 74% in 1995

Funding for Libraries, K-12 funding: regular stable funding but will campaign hard against private school funding, more training for EA's and positions.

Input to BC FED: Laird Cronk on Govt Recovery Task Force: only labour rep. Go to bcfed.ca and read submissions on homepage.

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Attended opening session of legislation. Met with Minister of Labour: Worksafe BC presumptive coverage for COVID. Justin Schmidt: report pending.

Fall Provincial Election: Horgan very popular right now. We doing very well. Gotta play the long game for 2021 and onward.

CUPE Convention: Spring 2021: not sure if this will be able to happen.

All sectors have been pushing hard. We are running the systems and working hard: value of CUPE workers is known

On the Regional Prosperity Economic Management Board: with 27 other individuals: only 3 labour spots: CUPE, USW, New West Labour Council, but that is a positive sign.

Trevor Davies CUPE BC Sec/Treasurer

Zooming in from Ferry: recognition to all for efforts, technology adoption is moving quick. Pandemic Fund for Locals: up to 3000 for local for tech adoption to adapt. Saskatchewan adopted a similar program. Division can help if you need money for tech. So far only 44 locals using. No meeting of 50 or more people so we need technology to help.

Meena Brisard Regional Director

Now in 4th month in remote work, 100 staff reps, working hard to support and maintain CA rights and OHS rights. Bargaining, mediation and arbitration moved online. Significant changes in how we work, we have made gains: now how do we get back to work safely. LOA's and safety principles need to be in place: make sure they get negotiated. Bar against Contracting Out/P3s. Recovery will need to monitor and guard against privatization: PNE as an example: don't qualify for CERB and have a massive shortfall: rumours of private interests waiting to take over.

Reviewing return to work plans, higher rates of recall in smaller communities than larger. Cutting back public services under the guise of the 'Pandemic'.

Organizing during Pandemic: virtual organizing: first time in the Country: organized 150 rec workers into local 403. Working hard to support Libraries and increase funding.

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Transportation: Airlines: Air Transat returning 300 members to work, Air Canada is going to follow.

Essential Service Workers: increasing pay for most by \$4, for those working with most marginalized members of society impacted by COVID.

September Restart plan for K-12: a committee with 2 CUPE members will be meeting through the summer and into the fall.

Childcare Campaign: before and after school care, lobbying Govt: presented a report that was very well received: strong research underpinning our submission. Developing a campaign: seamless day model.

Mark Hancock

Almost like being at Convention but not quiet. In Coquitlam. Haven't been on a plane in 3 months.

Adapting and using technology. On a ZOOM meeting with Can/US union leaders: PSI.

Looking forward to being able to participate via technology but I'm looking forward to meeting in person.

Commend staff reps. Best staff in the country. BC doing so well in this Country. John Horgan, Adrian Dix, Dr. Bonnie are just amazing. 'Bastard' in Alberta shouldn't be governing.

Proud New Democrat: care about public services.

CLC: Trudeau gets mixed grades but I can't imagine Sheer being in charge. Jagmeet has been doing great: improved budget and resources. CLC has played a role in that.

Pandemic has pushed back CLC Convention: maybe next spring or next fall or maybe even a virtual convention. Will look to change the CLC then.

CUPE has lost 6 members to COVID 19: This is not a bad flu. Belittles the members and belittles what we are battling.

Height of initial lay offs: 86 000 laid off: today, 73 000, 12 000 are flight attendants. Slow improvements. Seasonal workers coming back.

Right wingers are going to be pushing austerity, we will be standing up to that

George Floyd: video of BLM, not immune in Canada. Have to take this on and do better.

Redirect resources from police: not a new discussion: harm reduction etc. Resources need to go to harm reduction services too. Services are so important and saves lives.



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Long Term Care: shown a light on this sector. BC handled the shut down between homes immediately.
Campaign: bring into the Can Health Act, take profit out of senior care, regulate federal and RESPECT residence and workers. Sign petition and share campaign.

END: 8:09pm

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