

CUPE

Local 500



Positively Public Campaign Update

CUPE Local 500 is campaigning to protect public services!

Over the past four years, Local 500 members have faced a growing attack on the way public services are delivered to the citizens of Winnipeg. Since 2005, garbage collection has been privatized, the City's Glacial Sand and Gravel Operations were sold and Assiniboine Park has been handed over to a private board to run.

In 2007, the Mayor released a document known as the Economic Opportunity Commission (EOC) Report which targeted a number of specific public services for elimination, downsizing and contracting out or privatization. In response to these threats, Local 500 launched a multi-faceted four-year campaign aimed at stopping the contracting out, shutting down and privatization of Winnipeg's public services.

The following highlights some of our strategies, action plans and results in our fight-back efforts to protect public services.

Threats to public services EOC - 2007 Recommendations

- Animal Services
- Bill Collection
- Assiniboine Park Governance
- Brady Road Landfill
- Facility Maintenance
- Fitness Centres
- Fleet Management
- Cemetery Maintenance
- Golf Courses
- Legal Services
- Payroll
- Print Services
- Road Construction and Maintenance
- IT Work
- Rail Line Services
- Parks and Forestry
- Snow Removal
- Snow Dumping Sites

Campaign Strategies

- Research/collect relevant information on contracting out/privatization initiatives
- Member Mobilizing/Involvement
- Communication plan
- Educate the Public
- Support Citizen Action (Coalitions)
- Civic Unions Support
- Lobby Politicians

Council attempts to implement recommendations

Service Targeted

311 Contact Centre

- Three consolidated service delivery options proposed:
- internally operated service;
 - outsourced to the private sector;
 - hybrid model – (one which outsources infrastructure and utilizes city staff).

*City favoured outsourcing

Contacting out of golf course operations and maintenance

- City contracts out aeration services
- No formal notice to Union to contract out – talks going at City “behind the scenes”

Contracting out of custodial services

- City of Winnipeg business plan - June 30/08 - contracting out of 38 custodial services positions in Building Services

City attempts budget reductions and operational changes to Park Police Services

- City attempts to reduce 14 Park Police Officers to 7 and proposes operational changes to park policing

City proposes and subsequently approves Municipal Corporate Utility Model

- November 2008, City Council votes to explore Municipal Corporate Utility (MCU)
- Also approved – to use P3 method to design, construct, finance and operate water and waste control centres
- In July 2009, Winnipeg City Council voted in favour of creating a Municipal Corporate Utility to operate city water and wastewater services. They will use a ‘strategic partner’ or business method (public-private partnership) to “design, construct, finance and operate” water and waste control centres

Union Response/Results

Union Response

- Nine month campaign
- 311 Committee formed
- Committee develops recommendations for internally operated 311 Centre
- Presentations at EPC/City Council

Result: City Council approves internally operated 311 Contact Centre

Union Response

- Policy Grievance filed re: contracting out of aeration services
- Distribution of leaflets at municipal golf courses

Result: Policy grievance upheld - no further attempts made to contract out

Union Response

- Letter to CAO
- Union committee formed
- Joint discussions between union and city

Result: Custodial services remain in-house

Union Response

- Meetings with City and Park Police Staff
- Leaflets distributed by Park Police Officers
- Presentations at Standing Committee / EPC /City Council

Result: Motion to reduce/change Park policing defeated at City Council - services/jobs remain with Local 500 members

Union Response

- Presentation to City Council – Nov. 18/08 and July/09 to EPC (29 delegations) & City Council (17 delegations)
- Union representation on City advisory committee/three subcommittees
- Local 500 Water and Waste Unit member support /involvement
- Coalition of community, student, church and union groups formed
- Participate/attend public water events (world water day; water forums, etc.)
- Use of promotional materials – water bottles
- Highlight water issue as part of overall ad campaign
- Meetings with the Province held

Overall Campaign Actions/Activities

Member and Public Awareness

- Create awareness/involvement among Local 500 members
- Educate Winnipeggers about the value of public services and dangers of contracting out and privatization
- Letters to the editor/editorials, radio and television interviews
- Work with local coalition groups, community and labour activists, civic unions, student and faith groups and retirees' association

Actions/Activities

Member mobilizing:

- Member email contact database (almost 1,000 registered)
- Workplace meetings – 40 held in 2008; 38 workplace meetings held in 2009 (as of end of August)

2009 Advertising Plan

- Billboard Campaign began in March and will run until November 16.
- Bus Ads begin on May 18 and run until December 20.
- Radio ads: April 30 – May 4 - spring clean-up
July 09 – Water Utility
- Community newspaper ad – June 09 – Public Services Week
- Leisure Guide Ad: Spring and Fall 09
- Banner Ad – Animal Services Calendar

In the Media

- Water Utility – Nov 08
- Pension Plan – Dec 08/Jan 09
- Snow removal – Jan/Feb 09
- Debate with contractors – Feb 09
- Volunteer Sandbagging efforts (“Blue shirts”) – April 09
- Garbage Collection – April and September 09

Winnipeg Citizens Coalition

- actively involved in civic by-election – candidate elected supports public services
- actively engaged in finding candidates for upcoming civic elections

Current Issues/Threats

• Park Police Services

• Library Services

• Community Services Restructuring

• Civic Election 2010

- City administration is proceeding with staffing reductions to park police officers and organizational changes. A Joint redeployment process is underway.
- The City has given formal notice to the Local that it plans to outsource portions of the Library's Support Services operations.
- The City is restructuring the Community Services Department.
- Political campaign and active recruitment of candidates for upcoming civic election is underway.