

March 2009

TO: All Central Council Delegates

**RE: PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

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Greetings:

Listed below please find a review of some of the key issues our Local has dealt with since our last Central Council meeting.

**1. "Positively Public" Campaign - Update**

This past month, a number of events were planned and held around the Positively Public Campaign. In addition, our members are actively taking part in various events and distributing brochures regarding the City's move towards the privatization of water services in the City of Winnipeg.

Our thanks go out to all members who gave of their personal time to help out with the recent "Positively Public" campaign activities.

**2. Municipal By-Election**

On March 17, John Orlikow was elected as the new City Councillor in the River Heights-Fort Garry Ward during the Municipal By-election. John will be a positive addition to City Council as he both values and recognizes the importance of public services and the need to invest in our City's infrastructure.

Thanks to all members and staff who helped out with John's election campaign.

**3. City of Winnipeg Park Police**

On March 19, the City's Executive Policy Committee (EPC) of Council did not concur in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works to

retain the current Park Police model. Instead, the Executive Policy Committee went against its Standing Policy Committee and voted in favour of the following motion for submission to City Council:

1. That the Winnipeg Public Service continues with the reorganization with the Winnipeg Park Police at City Parks.
2. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

The above motion, if approved by City Council on March 25, will see the Park Police Service reorganized from 14 Park Police Officers to 7 Park Patrol Officers. The Administrative report also calls for 20 Seasonal Park Watch Ambassadors to aid in the park watch and patrol model.

The Local made two presentations at the Standing Committee on Infrastructure and Public Works and at the Executive Policy Committee to defend our members and to retain this important public service.

The members of our Park Police Service deserve much credit and recognition for their efforts and participation in the campaign to maintain this important service. These officers handed out thousands of brochures, collected names opposing the department's direction and also took part in the River Height's By-election. I am personally very proud of these brothers and their determination during this campaign.

**The Councillors who voted in favour of continuing with the reorganization of the Park Police Service were:**

Mike Pagtakhan  
Gord Steeves  
Justin Swandel  
Russ Wyatt  
Scott Fielding  
Mayor Sam Katz

**The Councillors who voted against the motion were:**

Bill Clement

**4. The City of Winnipeg's 2009 Operating Budget**

Local 500 took part in the 2009 City of Winnipeg's Operating Budget process. The local made two presentations at both the Standing Committee on Infrastructure and Public Works and at Executive Policy Committee.

Copies of our presentations are available here tonight or can be viewed on our website.

**5. The City of Winnipeg Hires PR Firm**

The City of Winnipeg has hired a public relations firm to sell voters on the concept of a new water and sewer utility. Even though the City has yet to decide whether to go ahead with the proposed utility, the company *Bigger Ideas* landed a \$250,000 contract to sell the deal to the public and conduct consultations about the proposed utility.

The plan includes a proposal to partner with private consulting or engineering firms on future upgrades at the North End and the South End water pollution control centers.

**6. World Water Day Event at City Hall**

The UN's World Water Day was March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2009.

Across Canada citizens and community groups gathered on Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup> to celebrate by making a Toast to Public Water in support of our municipal water systems.

Water is one of our most precious resources. We should all appreciate that we have access to clean and affordable municipal

tap water on a daily basis and the importance of public water systems across Canada and around the world.

Special thanks to Sister Sallie Caufield for taking a leading role on organizing this year's Toast to Public Water event at city hall.

**7. CUPE Local 500 Launches Billboard Ads against Water Privatization in Winnipeg**

Billboard ads against the privatization of water were launched this month by Local 500.

In November 2008, Winnipeg City Council voted to explore setting up "a new arm's length business model to operate city owned utilities." As part of this motion, Council approved using that "business model" to design, construct, finance and operate water and wastewater control centres.

These ads are all part of the Union's "Positively Public" Campaign to protect and maintain public services. The Local will also be placing ads on transit buses beginning in late April or early May.

**Billboard Ads:**

**WHERE:** 1. Portage Avenue W/O Broadway  
2. Main St. S/O Graham  
3. Kenaston Blvd. S/O Lawson Cres.  
4. Arlington St. N/O Logan Ave.

**WHEN:** Starting Tuesday, March 10, 2009

**8. International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination – Luncheon Event – March 19**

On March 19, I attended a luncheon event in recognition of March 21 – International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The Local has contributed to this important learning event over the past five years. About 220 people were in attendance including representatives from labour organizations, crown corporations and the three levels of government.

March 21 serves as a world wide reminder of the dire consequences of racism, and urges us to recall our collective obligation and determination to combat racial discrimination.

**9. Redevelopment of the Cindy Klassen Recreation Complex**

The City of Winnipeg recently held an official unveiling of the \$8.8 million dollar redevelopment of the former Sargent Park Recreation Complex. There is a 30,000-square-foot addition to the complex that includes a 133-meter Olympic indoor track with a new fitness and weight room area, and a 50-meter indoor swimming pool.

The other major addition is a new West End Library Branch that has more than 6,000 square feet and more computer workstations. The complex is also home to the Susan Auch Speed Skating Oval as well as six new tennis courts.

Local 500 was invited to this event but not asked to participate in the opening ceremonies. There was no recognition given to our members as being the front line workers in this facility even though they have clearly provided outstanding service on a daily basis for many years. However, we know that the public is appreciative of the work and services our members provide to the citizens of Winnipeg.

**10. Good of the Union**

Sister Cathy Williams Stewart was recently awarded the Art Coulter Labour Community Service Award from the Winnipeg Labour Council and the United Way of Winnipeg. This award is in recognition of her on-going commitment to her community.

Very recently Cathy was active working on the phone bank for John Orlikow's Campaign and is currently working in the phone bank for Bill Blaike. Congratulations to Cathy! She makes us all very proud.

**Conclusion:**

Please share this current issues document with your co-workers.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M Davidson". The "M" is large and stylized, with the "D" following it, and "avidson" is written in a cursive script.

Mike Davidson  
President

MD/ng  
cope 342

c.c. Sandra Oakley, CUPE Manitoba Regional Director