

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**

In early March, the Local will start its public advertising component of the campaign beginning with billboards at various locations. As well, we will be running a series of bus advertisements over the next six months. Educating and making the public aware of our campaign is a very key component for our success.

Workplace meetings will commence again and I urge all of you to call our office or talk to your unit president to arrange a meeting. As well, the local will be meeting and talking to different unions, associations and faith groups.

If you can help promote the campaign in any way, please advise our office.

**2. Park Police for the City of Winnipeg**

At a recent Public Works and Infrastructure Committee meeting, a decision was made to hold off on a proposal to cut seven Park Police positions. City councillors said that the plan needed to be studied in greater detail. Both the Local and some concerned citizens made presentations at the meeting.

Councilor Dan Vandal, Gord Steeves and Harvey Smith voted unanimously to back off on the cuts until the City's Public Works Department had a chance to prepare a more detailed report.

### **3. Bargaining Update**

On February 18, Local 500 members at Riverview Health Centre and Winnipeg Regional Health Authority voted in favour of a new four-year collective agreement. The main gains made in this round of bargaining included wage increases of 2.9% for each of four years and an increase in the employer's contribution to the benefits package.

In other bargaining news, negotiations will soon commence at the Winnipeg Convention Centre and Kirkfield-Westwood Community Centre.

### **4. Ethics Motion Passes at City**

At the meeting of City Council on February 18, a motion calling on the Province of Manitoba to review and amend existing legislation to create stronger Conflict of Interest rules and guidelines for the City of Winnipeg and Council was passed with a vote of 7 to 6.

Voting in favour of the motion: Councillors Browaty, Fielding, Pagtakhan, Gerbasi, Vandal, Thomas and Smith.

Voting against the motion: Mayor Sam Katz, Councillors Steeves, Swandel, Nordman, O'Shaughnessy and Lazarenko.

Councillors Wyatt and Clement were not at the meeting.

This is the wording of the resolution which will be sent to the Provincial Government:

"THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that City Council call on the Province of Manitoba to review and amend existing legislating to create stronger Conflict of Interest rules and guidelines for the City of Winnipeg and council through such measures as the establishment of a separate municipal office for the Conflict of Interest Commissioner or by expanding the role and responsibilities of the existing Commissioner."

### **5. Motion on Real Estate Audit Called Out of Order**

A motion moved by Councillor Vandal (seconded by Jenny Gerbasi) which called for an audit of policies related to the sale and leasing of city owned real estate, was ruled out of order by the speaker.

The motion was in response to a public listing for the sale of the Winnipeg Square Parkade, a public asset worth \$35 million dollars that has not been declared surplus.

The speaker's ruling was challenged but the ruling was upheld by a vote of 9 to 4. The four councillors who voted to proceed with an audit were: Gerbasi, Vandal, Thomas and Smith.

## **6. Mayor's State of the City 2009 Address**

The Mayor's Annual State of the city Address was held in January hosted by the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce.

The Mayor's speech included a recap of previous commitments such as creating a transportation authority, a water and waste utility, launching 311 and reviewing Plan Winnipeg.

There was also a new commitment made to hire a "Chief Performance Officer". It would appear that the role of this administrator would be to assist the City Auditor in making sure the Departments are held accountable for the money they spend. The 2009 budget was touched on and was described by the Mayor as a "battle" where taxes will again be frozen. We have now had over a decade of property tax freezes and roll backs.

## **7. Standing Policy Committee on Finance**

At City Council's meeting on January 28, there was a motion from the Standing Committee on Finance to increase fees and charges in Public Works and the Fire Paramedic Services. For some citizens this would involve increases for "park" space rentals, block parties and other community events.

Here's how they voted:

Voted in favour for the increases in fees:

Jeff Browaty  
Bill Clement  
Scott Fielding

Harry Lazarenko  
Grant Nordman  
Mike O'Shaughnessy  
Mike Pagtakhan  
Gord Steeves  
Justin Swandel  
Russ Wyatt  
Mayor Sam Katz

Voted against the increases in fees:

Jenny Gerbasi  
Harvey Smith  
Lillian Thomas  
Daniel Vandal

## **8. Local 500 Library Event**

The Honorable Christine Melnick, Minister of Water Stewardship for the Province of Manitoba, was recently a guest speaker at the Millenium Library. The Minister spoke about the valuable services our members provide to the citizens of Winnipeg and how libraries add to the quality of countless lives on a daily basis.

Christine is a former member of Local 500 and continues to be a very strong advocate for library services across the entire province. She also noted that in these tough economic times, our libraries provide comfort and a safe place for many people.

## **9. Roadside Memorial Decision To Be Reconsidered**

There will be another chance for discussion and debate on the proposed by-law that would have required the removal of roadside memorials within 90 days of the date of the fatality.

Council heard reasonable and thoughtful suggestions from Local 500 member Crystal Caron who spoke to Council as a citizen asking for reconsideration of the 90 days restriction.

A referral to the Protection and Community Services Committee creates an opportunity for public discussion and potential changes to the proposed by-law.

**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, followed by "Davidson" in a cursive script.

Mike Davidson  
President

MD/ng  
cope 342

c.c. Sandra Oakley, CUPE Manitoba Regional Director