

TO: All Central Council Delegates

Date: January 26, 2009

RE: PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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

Our "Positively Public" Campaign continues to move forward.

Since mid-December, Park Police officers have been distributing information brochures to the public despite the very harsh weather conditions. Thousands of brochures have been distributed outlining the very important services Park Police provide and have been providing for over a hundred years.

On January 14, I participated in a panel discussion following the award-winning documentary film "FLOW" for the love of water at the Cinematheque. The panel also included Sacha Kopelow from the Manitoba Eco Network Water Caucus; Lynne Fernandez of the Canadian Center for Policy Alternatives. This event clearly focused on the fact that we are in a global water crisis and our city leaders have taken the first steps to privatize our water services in our community.

We have more events planned and scheduled that not only educate the public but also our members and members from other unions. I would also encourage all of our members to participate in these events and help out whenever you can. Please also include your family members where possible.

2. 311 Service Up and Running

As of January 16, 2009, the city's 24 hour 311 service was up and running. Our members are taking public calls that deal with everything from pot holes to the leisure guide to general enquiries.

The new downtown CUPE operated contact centre was made possible through a joint effort of Local 500 members and the City of Winnipeg. Our members were instrumental and played a key role in saving this service from being contracted out. The City could not ignore the significant savings and experience our members would bring to the table in making their decision to keep this service in-house. CUPE local 500 was recognized for their contributions at the official opening media event.

3. Upcoming City of Winnipeg Operating Budget

The local will take part in this year's 2009 operating budget debate. We are anticipating another tough budget process that could ultimately call for more public services to be contracted out/privatized.

Already, we are seeing signs of this in our fleet and this year's snow removal operations. Our clean-up for an "all out plow" used to be around \$1-1.5 million dollars. We are now seeing figures of approximately \$6 million dollars over the same period of time.

If any member sees or hears anything that can help the local prepare for this year's budget process, please contact your unit president, staff representative or the Local 500 office.

4. Bargaining Updates

The Local has served notice to Varsity View Sports Centre management to commence bargaining as soon as possible.

Bargaining will also commence shortly for our members at the Winnipeg Convention Centre and the Historical Museum of St. James Assiniboia.

Contract negotiations at Riverview Health Care Centre are still not complete. The Local will keep the members updated as information becomes available.

5. “End of Bush – Yes, We Can Event”

The End of Bush – Yes We Can Event was held to a sell-out crowd at the Park Theatre on January 20, 2009. Two local community bands, the “Dust Rhinos and the JD Edwards Band” provided the entertainment. This event was held to celebrate the end of the Bush years and look forward to hope and opportunity for all people. All proceeds went to the Winnipeg Citizens’ Coalition Group. This is a Winnipeg community based organization.

Special thanks and recognition go out to the Local 500 Young Members Committee who distributed information at this event.

6. Credit to our Members

Many of our members deserve credit and recognition for performing their jobs despite the cold weather conditions. We applaud you for continuing to provide quality public services under these harsh conditions, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Conclusion:

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

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Davidson". The letters are cursive and somewhat stylized.

Mike Davidson
President

MD/ng
cope 342

c.c. Sandra Oakley, CUPE Manitoba Regional Director

