

March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008

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. City of Winnipeg – 2008 Preliminary Operating Budget:***

The Local made presentations at both the City's Executive Policy and City Council regarding the 2008 operating budget.

The Local was critical of this year's operating budget stating that it lacked any immediate and long term plans to provide adequate funding, to maintain the city's physical infrastructure and social programs.

In addition, the Local criticized the \$12 million in vacancy management and the millions of dollars of cuts hidden in Other/General/Expenditure Management lines. For example, all the 'operational efficiencies' add up to over \$10 million. Expenditure Management is also evidently a way of hiding the fact that there will be more reductions, but officials have not yet decided where these will be.

Details on the actual staff cuts and their impact on services are not identified in the budget documents. However, it is very clear that front line service delivery will affect the quality of services provided to the citizens of Winnipeg.

Local 500 will be asking to meet with department representatives to determine the effect on CUPE members.

CUPE recommended that City Council reject the budget and send it back to city officials to develop a budget that meets the citizen's needs now and into the future.

Copies of the Union's presentations to Executive Policy Committee and City Council are available from the Local 500 office. Please call 942-1001 or drop by. You can also view the documents on the Local 500 website at [www.cupe500.mb.ca](http://www.cupe500.mb.ca)

## **2. "Positively Public" Campaign:**

The Local is continuing its work on the "Positively Public" campaign. On March 12<sup>th</sup>, a new group of advocates were trained to help with our mobilization efforts. It is important that our members understand the ramification of the Economic Opportunity Commission report, but also what action the Union needs to take to deal with it. The Local will continue with workplace visits as part of the campaigns objectives.

I would encourage all members to discuss the EOC report with co-workers, family, friends and your elected political representatives. Our public services are an important part of our community and as such we need to protect them and promote them. The local will keep the membership up-dated as issues unfold.

## **3. Town Hall Meetings:**

The Winnipeg Labour Council and the Canadian Labour Congress held a series of Town Hall Meetings as a starting point to educate and involve the citizens of Winnipeg about the impacts of the EOC report.

The EOC was set up to provide the City of Winnipeg with a menu of options for consideration towards the phasing out of the \$56 million dollar municipal business tax. In June 2007, the commission issued its report in which a number of specific services were targeted for elimination, downsizing, contracting out or privatization.

This would mean public services would be cut and citizens and families would pay more for services. The commission is made up of representatives from the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce and business interest groups, not every day citizens.

The Winnipeg Labour Council will be issuing a final report that will identify what citizens and families living in our city want, not just what the business groups and lobbyists want.

#### **4. *Assiniboine Park Governance:***

The founding Board of Directors for the Assiniboine Park Conservancy was announced to our members and volunteers earlier this month. The letter sent out indicates that their intention is to build on the studies and analysis of Assiniboine Park which was conducted over the past few years.

Also, the Board will create the Assiniboine Park Conservancy's first strategic plan for the park. We will keep the members updated as more information becomes available on this issue.

Listed below are the names of the 2008 Founding Board of Directors – Assiniboine Park Conservancy:

- Hartley Richardson
- Polly Craik
- Lloyd Axworthy
- Don Streuber
- Rosemary Dudtschak
- Dianne Zuk
- Mark Chipman
- Brenda Leipsic
- Angela Mathieson
- Dave Johnston
- Mike Stevens
- Marilyn Kapitany
- Greg Doyle
- Harvey Secter
- Bob Williams
- Scott Fielding

**5. *International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination:***

Local 500 took part in this event held at the Winnipeg Convention Centre on March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2008. This was in recognition of a peaceful protest in South Africa against Apartheid, when in 1960 police opened fire killing 60 people and wounding many others.

In 1966, to commemorate this tragic event and to encourage and promote harmonious race relations, the United Nations declared March 21<sup>st</sup> as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

**6. *Founding Meeting – City of Winnipeg/CUPE Joint Health and Safety Committee:***

The founding meeting of the newly formed Joint City/CUPE Health and Safety Committee was held on March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2008. This committee came about from the negotiations that took place during the 2005 – 2007 round of bargaining.

Health and safety concerns are very important to our members in Local 500 and as such these meetings will be very meaningful and beneficial. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the committee members for taking part on this committee.

- Steve Edwards – CUPE Staff Representative – Health and Safety
- Curt Beaudoin – Chair, CUPE Local 500 Health and Safety Committee, Local 500 Member
- Sheri Spencer – Local 500 Member
- Shaun Dagdick – Local 500 Member
- Walter Grestchman – Local 500 Member

**7. *Community Unemployed Help Centre:***

The Community Unemployed Help Centre held its annual general meeting here at the Union Centre on March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

The Community Unemployed Help Centre provides free, confidential services to individuals who have been unjustly denied EI Benefits or assessed penalties. The centre is funded by the United Way of Winnipeg, the Province of Manitoba and donations from other organizations including Local 500.

**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

