

February 25th, 2008

TO: All Central Council Delegates

RE: Current Issues Update

Greetings:

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

Bargaining Updates:

City of Winnipeg and Local 500:

On February 14th, 2008, members voted 85% in favour of the tentative agreement between the City of Winnipeg and CUPE Local 500. In total, 1,320 members voted on the new agreement.

The new deal provides for a wage increase of 7.2 per cent over the three years. It also includes a no lay-off provision for permanent staff during the life of the agreement. Other highlights include improvements to dental and vision as well as increases to shift premium, safety footwear and tool allowance.

The agreement also renews a Joint Education, Training and Staff Development Fund for \$1.5 million.

I would like to thank the members of the negotiating committee, staff and other members who contributed to the success of this tough round of bargaining.

I would also like to thank you, the members, for your patience and support while we worked on your behalf to reach an agreement.

Civic Unions:

The leaders of the Civic Unions and Associations' continue to meet on a regular basis to discuss matters of mutual concern. These meetings are an important way for us to discuss and strategize our response to various civic policies/practices and political decisions.

Mayor's Annual State of the City Address:

The Mayor's Annual State of the City Address was held on Friday, February 8, 2008 at the Winnipeg Convention Centre.

His speech focused mainly on infrastructure priorities, the Red Tape Commission, 311 contact centre and Aboriginal Youth Strategy. He spent the majority of time talking about improvements to public safety and reducing crime in the city.

The Mayor also talked about how this spring EPC and Council will explore how to change their approach to the water utility so it becomes a "real" utility, free to seek out customers, free from day-to-day financial or political interference, and with a clear, transparent financial relationship that can stand up to scrutiny from the Public Utility Board.

Councillor Dan Vandal raised this issue very effectively last year and we believe this is a positive commitment by the Mayor to make the utility more transparent.

For a complete copy of the Mayor's 2008 State of the City Speech, you can visit the Local 500 website at www.cupe500.mb.ca.

Upcoming Town Hall Meetings:

The Winnipeg Labour Council and Canadian Labour Council are hosting a number of town hall meetings at the end of February and in early March in connection with the Economic Opportunity Commission report. This report, if implemented, means public services will be cut and you will pay more for what you get. Please plan to attend one of these meetings to find out how you will be affected.

Saturday, Feb. 23rd 1-3 pm
Melrose Park CC – 480 Kimberly Ave.

Monday, Feb. 25th – 7-9 pm
Silver Heights CC – 2080 Ness Ave.

Wednesday, Feb. 27th – 7-9 pm
Sinclair Park CC – 490 Sinclair St.

Wednesday, Feb. 27th – 7-9 pm
River Osborne CC – 101 Pembina Hwy.

Thursday, Feb. 28th – 7-9 pm
Northwood CC – 1415 Burrows Ave.

Thursday, Feb. 28th – 7-9 pm
Orioles CC – 448 Burnell St.

Saturday, March 1st – 1-3 pm
Oxford Heights CC – 359 Dowling Ave. E.

Monday, March 3rd – 7-9 pm
Winakwa CC – 980 Winakwa Road

NDP Convention:

There were a number of CUPE members and staff in attendance at this year's NDP convention held on February 1st, 2nd and 3rd here in Winnipeg. Guest speakers included Premier Gary Doer and National NDP Jack Laden.

A number of good resolutions were put forth that included public private partnerships and the issue of accountability for public investment in private business. Other issues such as health, water and education were also debated and discussed at the convention.

CUPE National President Paul Moist was also in attendance and chaired a portion of the convention.

Friends of Phil Fontaine Event:

Assembly of First Nations Grand Chief Phil Fontaine and Manitoba's Grand Chief Ron Evans spoke at a gathering here in Winnipeg on January 31st, 2008.

They highlighted the fact that many aboriginal people across our country are living in poverty and are in need of decent homes, clean and safe drinking water and better schools.

Working together and building partnerships is the key to making positive changes in communities across Canada. Sadly, many people in our province are unaware of the conditions in Northern communities. Solutions to poor housing and over crowded schools remain a top priority.

Brother Brian Barron and I attended this event along with some other CUPE members.

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 a vertical line and the name "Davidson" in a cursive script.

Mike Davidson
President

MD/ng
cope 342

c.c. Sandra Oakley, CUPE Manitoba Regional Director

