

January 28th, 2008

TO: All Central Council Delegates

RE: President's Report: January 2008

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. 2008 City of Winnipeg Capital Budget

At a special meeting of City Council, the City's five year capital budget was passed in the amount of \$421.5 million dollars. The matter that drew the most attention was the city's continuing efforts to use public private partnerships, also known as P3's to finance small and large construction projects. Private companies front the costs of such partnerships and claim to pay the maintenance, while the city pays to lease the infrastructure that the private sector has built.

CUPE is opposed to P3's and this long term debt will cost much more to the citizens of our city while delivering less. The City can borrow money at a lesser rate than the contractor and could also put tenders out for these capital projects. Local 500 has gone on record opposing the use of P3's during the capital budget process.

2. Positively Public the Winnipeg Way Campaign – Economic Opportunity Commission (EOC):

This campaign launched by Local 500 in response to the Economic Opportunity Commission Report, is about highlighting the quality of public services our members provide to the citizens of Winnipeg, day in and day out.

The four-year campaign strategy includes member mobilization, public awareness and a lobbying action plan that intends to stop the contracting out and privatization of Winnipeg's public services.

Many workplace meetings have taken place and will continue to be scheduled with our members to explain the potential impact of the EOC report and its recommendations.

We will also continue to educate the public through various radio and newspaper ads.

3. *Freedom of Information Request:*

The Local 500 office has received a response relating to the request for information regarding the construction and leasing arrangement to the Charleswood Bridge and to the sale of the Glacial Sand and Gravel pit. The City's legal counsel's position is that this information in the agreement is confidential and cannot be shared.

In our view, the public has a right to know where and how their money is being spent. The Local will continue to pursue to obtain this information.

4. *Bargaining Updates:*

Bargaining with the City of Winnipeg commenced on January 8th, 2008 and talks are continuing.

Bargaining bulletins have been faxed to the workplaces and posted on the website to keep the membership updated on our progress. Please remember not to listen to any rumours that are circulating in the workplace. If you haven't heard it directly from the union, it may not be accurate.

We will continue to update the members as negotiations unfold.

5. *Water and Waste Supplement Agreement:*

Committee members from the Water and Waste Unit have met two times regarding the supplementary agreement. The Committee has been updating information and gathering input from the members in the work place in preparation of these important negotiations.

6. *CUPE Local 500/City of Winnipeg Joint Health and Safety Committee:*

During the last round of bargaining with the City, a Letter of Understanding was negotiated for a Joint Health and Safety Committee. This Joint Committee will consist of five representatives from both the Union and the City who are to meet on a regular basis to discuss health and safety issues that affect our members.

As a result, our office is in the process of organizing the first meeting for early March. Following this meeting, the Committee will report any information and/or progress back to the local. Health and safety issues are always a top priority for the Local.

7. *Hotel Tax Reconsidered by Politicians and Administrators:*

Winnipeg is the only major city in Canada that does not tax hotel rooms. City hall will reconsider using hotel room levies to pay for marketing agencies, tourism campaigns or even facility upgrades.

Most other Canadian cities have similar funding mechanisms in place ranging from a straight two per cent destination marketing fee used in Saskatoon to a combined five per cent hotel tax/marketing fee in Calgary.

A modest hotel tax may very well be in order in our city.

8. *Enforcement and Consolidation of Existing Neighbourhood Livability By-Laws:*

1. Consolidation of responsibility for By-Law Enforcement.
2. Consolidation of existing neighborhood livability By-Laws.

These reports recommend blending together all or part of 17 existing by-laws into a single “Neighbourhood Livability By-Law”. We are talking about by-laws that govern such issues as noise, derelict vehicles, temporary street signs, pigeons,

heating, no smoking, anti-litter and termite control to name a few.

The enforcement will fall under a new unit – the “Community By-Law Enforcement Services”.

The Local will continue to monitor this new unit.

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