

CANADIAN UNION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES LOCAL 500

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Central Council

October 26, 2026

CUPE / *Canadian Union
of Public Employees*
Local 500

LOCAL 500 UNIT ELECTIONS

Congratulations to everyone elected, re-elected, or acclaimed to their Unit Table Officer and Executive positions!

I look forward to working with all of you in solidarity over the coming year as we continue to support our members and strengthen our union.

CITY/CUPE BARGAINING UPDATE

We've reached an impasse with the City in our current round of bargaining, and the outstanding issues have now been referred to an independent arbitration panel for a final and binding decision.

We have two dates scheduled for arbitration: November 13 and December 11. These initial dates will involve the Arbitrator and the Union.

Our panel consists of Colin Robinson as Chair and Arbitrator, Wassim Garzouzi as our Union-appointed lawyer, and David Simpson as the City-appointed lawyer.

I believe interest arbitration gives us our best opportunity to make meaningful gains in certain areas, particularly for groups like some of our trades classifications, where we have comparators with other bargaining groups. We have an opportunity to make a strong case for improvements, and that's exactly what we intend to do.

To be clear, this is not a promise of specific gains or a particular outcome. The panel will consider the evidence and arguments presented by both sides before making its decision.

Our job is to ensure that Local 500's position is clearly presented and that we make the strongest possible case for our members.

We recognize that this has been a long and frustrating round of bargaining. I want to thank our membership for your patience, solidarity, and continued support throughout this process. We know the wait has been difficult, and we don't take our commitment to this Local for granted.

Our bargaining committee will continue to represent our members' interests throughout this process, and we'll share further updates as information becomes available.

MAYORAL ENDORSEMENT

I want to address CUPE 500's decision to endorse Scott Gillingham in the mayoral election. As union leadership, it is our responsibility to research the candidates, assess their records and policies, and make recommendations that advance the interests of our members. We believe the choice came down to two candidates with a realistic chance of becoming mayor, and we had to consider what each would mean for our members, our jobs, and the future of public services in Winnipeg.

Kevin Klein's record as a city councillor raised serious concerns. He opposed many initiatives supported by CUPE 500, including bringing work in-house and improving wages, and supported privatizing the new wastewater treatment facility through a public-private partnership. In contrast, Mayor Gillingham has helped grow CUPE 500's membership after decades of stagnation and cuts. His Neighbourhood Action Teams have created CUPE 500 jobs doing work often contracted out, while Community Safety Officers have brought a different approach to community safety, outside the Winnipeg Police Service.

His administration has also opened Winnipeg's first full-service library in decades and committed to restoring evening hours at several libraries.

Mayor Gillingham has also questioned the use of armed police officers to respond to mental health crises, something community groups have raised concerns about, especially in marginalized communities. His approach creates more opportunities for CUPE 500 members to provide community safety services and gives the City greater control over how those services are delivered.

Over the past four years, we have been able to fight for new gains rather than continuously defending against attacks on our members and public services.

Our endorsement reflects that difference. Mayor Gillingham has also pledged his support for CUPE 500's Local Guarantee, which outlines our priorities for protecting public services, creating good jobs, and building stronger communities. We will hold him accountable to that commitment and continue pushing for action on our priorities, including a living wage and bringing garbage collection in-house. Our endorsement is not a blank cheque, and we will continue to challenge the mayor when his decisions do not serve our members' interests.

I recognize that some members may disagree with our decision, but making informed recommendations on behalf of our members is part of our responsibility as a union. We made this endorsement because we believe it gives CUPE 500 the strongest opportunity to protect our members, build our public services, and continue moving our priorities forward.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

The municipal and school board election is October 28. Make sure you get out and vote! The decisions made at City Hall directly affect CUPE 500 members, our jobs, our working conditions, and the public services we provide.

Take the time to learn about the candidates and where they stand on issues that matter to working people. You can find the Winnipeg Labour Council's list of labour-endorsed candidates for City Council and school trustee positions on their website.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

November 8- Indigenous Veteran Day

November 11- Remembrance Day*

*Office closed.

CONCLUSION:

Please share this document with your co-workers.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Troughton', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Patrick Troughton
President