



VANCOUVER and DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL



REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 2019

1. LOCATION: Maritime Labour Centre, 1880 Triumph Street, Vancouver, BC

The VDLC acknowledges that this meeting is being held on the unceded traditional territory of the Musqueam, Squamish, Tsleil-Waututh, and other First Nations people.

2. CHAIRPERSON: Terry Engler, 1st Vice President

3. ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES: *Deferred to next meeting.*

4. CREDENTIALS:

The following credentials were received since the last VDLC meeting:

(* = recredentialled, A = alternate)

BCGEU Local 303

Stacey Vu

ILWU Local 400

Liam Lumsden

HEU St. Paul's Hospital Local

Dexter Basbas

Retail Wholesale Union Local 580

Chris McCuaig *

HEU PHSA Amalgamated Local

Jovito Espinoza

MSC to obligate/seat the delegate(s).

5. GUEST SPEAKER:

Vancouver City Councillor Christine Boyle

Councillor Boyle ran with OneCity Vancouver. The VDLC played a very significant role in the 2018 municipal election, and while it was not an easy job, it is very important to pull together to elect progressive majority governments. Christine thanked the labour council for that work. Vancouver City Council sometimes struggles, depending on the issue, to find their balance to achieve a good outcome, but they continue to work to move forward.

One of the issues that OneCity ran on, was a land value capture to create public wealth out of the increases in land value, so that public wealth can then go to public priorities, like affordable housing and public transit. Councillor Boyle's first motion was for a land value tax, it passed. There is staff studying it with the BCGEU, BC Assessment, the CCPA's Marc Lee, and others to see how a land value tax can be implemented in Vancouver.

The second motion was ramping up Vancouver's climate action plans; recognizing that the climate crisis is an emergency and responding appropriately. The motion passed unanimously. This was in part due to the number of people, many youth, who came in support of the motion.

Council will be reporting back in April on how Vancouver will be moving forward. Following the passing of that motion, several other municipalities have passed similar ones.

Council has been preparing for a citywide plan for Vancouver. Councilor Boyle sees one of her roles in that, is pushing for low-income space in all areas of the city. That inclusivity for all being a requirement of the plan, not a choice for neighbourhoods – making every neighbourhood, for everyone.

Christine chairs the nominations committee doing a lot of work around equity and diversity, ensuring that the voices heard through the city's advisory committees are diverse in their representation. A lot of work is being done on passing a diversity policy for their committees and creating a racial equity committee.

There has been a lot of work collaboratively on protecting tenants and Christine is pleased to be working with Mayor Kennedy Stewart on that. Mayor Stewart is very committed to doing whatever they can to prevent displacement. Councilor Jean Swanson has been a tireless advocate on this, as have Councilors Pete Frye and Adriane Carr as well. There is some good synergy at work moving this issue forward.

None of this, is work that can be done alone. Christine is thankful for their allies as they figure out how they can best move forward on these issues.

There are still a number of things that OneCity wants to move forward on: indigenous justice, electoral reform, arts and culture, and strengthening the existing 'Access Without Fear'/sanctuary cities policies. There is a lot of work ahead. Councilor Boyle is proud to work and collaborate with the people at OneCity and in the community.

The importance of electing a stronger progressive majority in the next election can't be overstated. OneCity is already working towards that. With the new rules in place, prohibiting donations from unions, they rely on individual monthly contributions to do the work to train and encourage candidates for the next election. While progressives might not be able to out-fund the NPA, we can out-organize. Christine and OneCity are firm believers that organized people, can beat organized money. Please sign-up, donate, share on social media, and help build the network.

6. EDUCATIONAL:

Monica Urrutia, Kari Michaels, and Sylvia Marques - 2018 Solidarity Tour to the Philippines

The tour to the Philippines was co-organized by the VDLC, BCGEU, and CULE, stemming from the solidarity work of the labour council started over a decade ago; BCGEU and CULE have been the mainstay supporters of that program since the beginning. The speakers presented on their experience in the Philippines, learning first hand from the Filipino people, and the work of the Adopt-an-Organizer program.

7. PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

President Stephen von Sychowski reported on VDLC activities since the January 2019 meeting.

Political Action

We met with Mayor Kennedy Stewart on March 6. Andrew Ledger (CUPE Local 1004), Warren Williams (CUPE Local 15), and Kari Scott-Whyte (CUPE Local 391) attended as well.

I worked with IUOE Local 115 to overcome some concerns about the wording of the school lunch program motion at the February 26 meeting.

We sent out a letter to all endorsed candidates in the past municipal election and one to all progressives who were not endorsed. The letter invites them to our meetings and to request to speak, bring forward items for our consideration, etc. It also expresses our desire to form or strengthen relationships and our intention to build on our capacity to engage in municipal politics across our district.

As you saw, we had Christine Boyle address council this month. The Municipal Engagement Committee is proposing we invite a different endorsed elected politician each month.

The Municipal Engagement Committee is identifying a whole number of issues for us to watch or act on, more information on these will be coming next meeting.

I attended a Living Wage coalition meeting on March 7. The coalition is working on having the Vancouver School Board sign on as a living wage employer. Apparently only one job currently falls under living wage. They are also starting to look at Richmond and the City of North Vancouver. They have met with some Richmond Councilors to discuss. In North Vancouver Angela Girard, who we have endorsed, has expressed interest in bringing it forward. I have communicated our support for this and my willingness to be involved in helping bring it forward.

Labour Day

Following two organizing meetings, a series of calls to affiliates and sponsors, and a presentation to the BC Federation of Labour Executive, we were not able to secure commitments for more than 50% of the funds needed for a partnership with the PNE for Labour Day this year. The reasons for this are affiliate concerns about the over-all cost, accessibility, and restrictions on political messaging.

We are instead moving the event to Jack Poole Plaza where we will have full creative control of the event and ability to do politics. More information coming soon.

Metro Vancouver Alliance

Metro Vancouver Alliance is hosting a training session “Building Power for Community Good” at UBC from May 13 to 17. This is an Industrial Areas Foundation training program with facilitators coming from the foundation to deliver the content. MVA held a Leadership Institute March 15 and 16. Its AGM is March 26 at VCC.

May Day

The theme of the May Day march and rally this year will be “the Right to Strike”. Messaging, speakers, and event details are being worked out now and a poster will be released shortly.

International Women’s Day

The annual dinner was a big success and a sold out event once again this year. Viveca Ellis and Phyllis Joseph from the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition were the keynote speakers and there was lively entertainment from Jacky Arrah Yenga. Congratulations to the Women’s

Committee and a big thanks to Keziah.

Adopt an Organizer Program

We will have a report back this month from the Solidarity Tour that visited the projects we fund through the Adopt an Organizer Program last November. The program continues on as usual, but we hope to build upon it using the report backs from the tour. We also want to acknowledge a \$500 donation from CUPE Local 391!

One project we have been supporting is the organizing of Hanjin shipyards. Hanjin has come into financial troubles and is closing down – leaving the workers displaced. We have been supporting their demands over the past several weeks with letters to the Department of Labour, solidarity statements, and a video statement.

United Way of the Lower Mainland

United Way launched their Period Promise (formerly Tampon Tuesday) campaign this month. The VDLC will take collections for the duration of the campaign. A full box was collected at the IWD Dinner.

Constitutional Review

Our Constitutional Review Committee has been struck and is composed of myself, Stefan Nielsen (UFCW 1518), Nick Aubichon (CUPW), Terry Engler (ILWU 400), Graham O'Neil (HEU), with Ron Stipp and Keziah McCrystal-Rothlin as non-voting members. The first committee meeting will be April 11.

Tim Cheung

I am very happy to report that Tim has contacted me to say he is now on the mend. He thanks us for our support during his lengthy medical ordeal.

Events Attended

February 25 – May Day Organizing Committee

February 27 – Pink Shirt Day

March 2 – MoveUP Job Steward Seminar

March 5 – BC Fed conference call re: Employment Standards

March 5 – Metro Vancouver Alliance Strategy Team

March 6 – United Way of the Lower Mainland, Campaign Cabinet Labour Caucus

March 6 – United Way of the Lower Mainland, Labour Committee of the Board

March 6 – Meeting with Mayor Kennedy Stewart

March 7 – Living Wage Municipal Committee

March 8 – Vancouver Convention Centre meeting re: Labour Day

March 8 – International Women's Day dinner

March 11 – May Day Organizing Committee

March 12 – BC Fed Executive Council

March 12 – Metro Vancouver Alliance Strategy Team

March 13 – United Way of the Lower Mainland Community Investment Research Committee

March 14 – VDLC Executive

March 14 – Executive Council Blanket Exercise

March 15 – Municipal Engagement Committee

8. CORRESPONDENCE: Circulated at the meeting

MSC that the correspondence be received and filed for the information of the delegates.

9. EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS:

a) *MSC that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: Spending Authorizations

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL authorize the following expenditures:

- Contribution to the 34th Miners Memorial in Cumberland, BC – At a cost of \$100.00

b) *MSC that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: Vancity Board of Directors Elections

BECAUSE Vancity Credit Union is holding elections for its Board of Directors this April; and

BECAUSE VDLC President Stephen von Sychowski is a candidate in this election,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL endorse Stephen von Sychowski for the Vancity Board of Directors and will communicate this endorsement to our delegates, affiliates, and contacts.

c) *MSC that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: Mandatory Vaccinations in BC

BECAUSE the Lower Mainland is experiencing another outbreak of measles after years of government inaction to reverse declining vaccination rates; and

BECAUSE media outlets recently reported on the story of an infant who was under close watch because they may have been exposed to measles at BC Children's Hospital and had not yet reached one year, the age for vaccination against measles, mumps, and rubella; and

BECAUSE neighbouring Washington State has recently declared a state of emergency due to a serious measles outbreak; and

BECAUSE BC has an immunization program which provides vaccination against measles, mumps, and rubella free of charge; and

BECAUSE as of 2014 (the last time it was checked) less than 1/2 of schools in the Lower Mainland have vaccination rates of 90% or higher, seven had rates under 60%; and

BECAUSE failure to vaccinate promotes the spread of preventable illnesses and jeopardizes lives and wellbeing of the most medically vulnerable amongst us such as those with compromised immune systems, infants, and the elderly; and

BECAUSE Health Minister Adrian Dix announced recently that as of this fall students in BC will be required to report their immunization status, but immunizations still will not be required; and

BECAUSE a Change.org petition calling for the implementation of mandatory vaccinations has gathered over 44,000 signatures and is continuing to grow,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL write to Health Minister Adrian Dix calling for the implementation of mandatory vaccinations, with appropriate exclusions where medically necessary or on legitimate human rights grounds.

d) *MSC that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: First Call BC, Open Letter to Minister Bains on Child Employment Standards

BECAUSE children as young as 12 years of age can legally work in nearly any occupation in British Columbia; and

BECAUSE due to changes made by the BC Liberal government in 2003, we are now the only jurisdiction in Canada which does not place restrictions on occupations, tasks, or times of day that children can work; and

BECAUSE every year over the past decade, children under 15 were injured on the job seriously enough for WorkSafeBC to pay out over five million dollars in injury claims, sometimes with life-altering injuries,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL sign on to the open letter from First Call BC to Minister of Labour Harry Bains calling for modernization of BC Employment Standards to protect children and youth.

[\(https://firstcallbc.org/publications/open-letter-to-minister-bains-on-child-employment-standards/\)](https://firstcallbc.org/publications/open-letter-to-minister-bains-on-child-employment-standards/)

e) *MSC that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: Access BC

BECAUSE Access BC is a campaign calling for free access to prescription contraceptives through the BC public health care system; and

BECAUSE removing all barriers to accessing contraception is a powerful affirmation of the right of women to determine for themselves when and whether to become pregnant and bear children, a right supported in both federal and provincial arenas; and

BECAUSE providing free access to contraceptives is good health policy in both the preventive and therapeutic spectra. The measure will improve health outcomes for mothers and infants by reducing the risks associated with unintended pregnancy, particularly among adolescents and by maximizing the health benefits and outcomes of preparing for planned pregnancy; and

BECAUSE the investment will yield a significant return in reduced public expenditure beyond the cost; and

BECAUSE the availability of publicly funded contraception will have a significant impact on normalizing the conversation about sexual and reproductive health, and on increasing the likelihood that school sexual health curriculum includes comprehensive,

factual, and non-judgmental information on contraceptive use,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL endorse and promote Access BC and its call for free prescription contraceptives.

f) *MSC that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: YVR Workers Facing Job Losses

BECAUSE some ninety food service workers, members of UNITE HERE Local 40, may lose their employment as a result of contract flipping at YVR; and

BECAUSE about 40% of these workers have been employed in their jobs for over ten years, and many for as long as twenty; and

BECAUSE there is currently no guarantee that a worker will retain their employment when a contract changes hands; and

BECAUSE contract flipping is demonstrated to erode wages and working conditions and undermine job security; and

BECAUSE the provincial government is expected to bring legislation forward to address the problem of contract flipping, following a report issued last year, however, there are concerns that the report looks only at cleaning services, security services, and transportation services, but misses food services which is an area where contract flipping remains a persistent concern,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL express its support for the affected YVR workers and for UNITE HERE Local 40 and assist, however possible, in actions related to this issue; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL write to Minister of Labour Harry Bains calling for legislation to ensure successorship rights for workers in all industries.

10. REPORT OF UNIONS:

a) HEU Dogwood Lodge Local – Reported by Karen McVeigh

HEU will be holding their Equity Conference from March 25 to 27. Two main highlights are Canadian spoken work performer, author, and LGTBQ advocate Ivan Coyote and everyone, including the provincial executive, will be participating in the Blanket Exercise. HEU will be conducting lots of education this spring.

b) CUPW Local 846 – Reported by Nicholas Aubichon

Postal Workers are still on back to work legislation. New hearing dates for arbitration continue into the summer. On the last day before the break, CUPW presented evidence about the overburdening of workloads on letter carriers. Letter carriers have been working using a back-to-back system of carrying multiple bundles of product that is awkward and difficult.

Canada Post Corporation has a new president, Doug Ettinger. Ettinger has a past with private companies like Coca Cola; he was Chief Commercial Officer for Canada Post from

2016 until his appointment to President and CEO.

- c) ILWU Local 500 – Reported by Joulene Parent
At the end of March ILWU will be 1 year without a contract. The big sticking point is negotiating before automation.

The following reports were made but not submitted for the minutes:

- a) UA Plumbers Local 170 – Reported by Russ St. Eloi
- b) CUPE Local 391 – Reported by Gary Jarvis
- c) BCGEU Local 803 – Reported by Rick Consalvi

MSC to adopt the reports of committees.

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a) Women's – Reported by Caitin Davidson-King
Thank you to everyone who came out to the IWD Dinner, special thanks to the Women's Committee for the volunteer time given, and VDLC staff person Keziah for the work she did and support given to the committee chairs. Next meeting is April 17, 6:00 pm at the VDLC office.
- b) Solidarity in Action – Reported by Stephen von Sychowski
MoveUP held a barbeque Saturday, March 16 in support of strikers at Westminster Savings. These members are fighting against the implementation of a two-tiered pension plan. Workers are being asked to sign to keep their defined benefit pension plan at the cost of any new employees, who will not get it. These 8 workers have been on the line for 60 days, not for themselves, but for future employees. They are what this movement is about. All support is appreciated.

OTHER REPORTS:

- a) BC FORUM – Reported by Agnes Jackman
At their last Board meeting, BC FORUM endorsed VDLC President Stephen von Sychowski for the Vancity Board of Directors.

BC FORUM is still having to focus on sustainability in regards to funding and membership; both are on a downward trend. Membership applications are available in the 2019 spring Advocate on page 15, or in the BC FORUM brochures which were circulated. Sister Jackman also had copies of the 2018 summer Advocate which breaks down the benefits available to BC FORUM members.

The next BC FORUM Board meeting is Tuesday, May 14.

- b) CLC – Reported by Ron Stipp and Joulene Parent
The federal budget was modest, for a pre-election budget, with all its spending at the back end of the term – meaning after the election, so it's an elect us or don't get anything budget. While there is no universal Pharmacare, they've made 3 commitments: 1) a Canadian drug agency to coordinate drug purchases, 2) develop a national formulary, and 3) \$1 billion towards drugs for rare diseases that are incredibly expensive, but not until 2022.

Public pensions have been improved for GIS, while there wasn't an increase, they've removed the claw back for those seniors that work a little to supplement the income,

increasing the limit to \$5000. The CLC wanted to see pension plans protected against bankruptcy, but there was nothing.

Some investment made to the EI appeals process, but nothing clear and no return to the Board of Referees.

On skills training, there is a Canada Training Benefit, tax credits on tuition fees – can be applied to union training programs. Student loan floating interest rates will be lowered for federal student loans.

No investment in Just Transition which is very disappointing for transition to green jobs programs. They are going to ‘review’ the subsidies to fossil fuel industries.

Some commitment on housing, with an incentive for CMHC to back some first time home buyers by reducing the down payment and covering it, how that will actually work is unclear; an increase to the amount of RRSPs that can be taken out when purchasing a home from \$25,000 to \$35,000; and a \$10 billion commitment for rental construction over the next 5 years.

There is quite a bit of money committed to follow up on Reconciliation issues (drinking water, housing, and health care); and apparently they will be fixing Phoenix. There a few other items, but nothing on labour’s priorities.

The CLC is organizing its first indigenous lobby in Ottawa on April 2. Topics being considered are justice for indigenous people and issues relevant to the missing and murdered indigenous women and girls; truth and reconciliation commission and access to clean drinking water on reserves; and creating a National Indigenous holiday.

MSC to allow Neal Adolph to address delegates.

- c) United Way Lower Mainland – Reported by Neal Adolph
Period Promise campaign is gaining a lot of momentum. We’re seeing menstrual products on the front page of local papers daily; the conversation is shifting and the stigma is lifting. This is in no small part due to the conversations and work being done by supporters in their workplaces and in the community. Letters have been sent to every municipality and school district in the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley and good conversations are starting at the municipal and province levels. There have been no commitments from any municipalities, other than New Westminster, while it is understandable that they need to look into costing etc., there are vulnerable people who need these products now.

Anyone not already running a Period Promise collection campaign in their workplaces, are encouraged to do so, the campaign runs until April 4. Everyone is invited to the United Way office for the final collection celebration on April 4.

MSC to receive the other reports.

12. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Still 1 vacancy for VDLC Executive Member-at-Large. CLC Representative Ron Stipp opened nominations.

Nominated: John Tweed, CUPW Local 846

Delegate acclaimed, pending confirmation of eligibility.

13. NEW BUSINESS: NIL

14. NOTICE OF MOTION: NIL

15. GOOD AND WELFARE:

- MPs should be accountable when unions like the CUPW are pushed to strike and PSAC members are effected by disasters like the Phoenix situation.
- March 21 is the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Migrant Rights Network is holding an event at the Vancouver Public Library.
- Thank you to the VDLC for sending out information regarding the far-right, extremist, white supremacist speakers that were going to speak in Vancouver. It prompted people to action and let them know, that such hate speech is not welcome in our city.
- March 30 at Peace Flame Park, protesting the NATO summit happening in Washington, DC, organized by Vancouver Peace Council
- Left Film Night, March 31, 7 pm – Celebrating Women’s History, screening film, *Rosa Luxemburg*
- The VDLC Executive participated in the Blanket Exercise. It’s a powerful way of learning and understanding what has been done to the first nations’ people of Canada. Anyone interested in doing this can contact the labour council. It’s very worthwhile.
- Raffle tickets - \$5 each – proceeds to benefit Queen Alexandra Elementary’s Wishing Tree free store – 5 prizes to be won: Guided Labour History Walking Tour, donated by Joey Hartman; Bulova Women’s 98L163 Watch, donated by Cavan Advertising; Labour History Book Collection, donated by the VDLC; Coffee Enthusiast’s Gift Basket, donated by Commercial Street Café; and handmade Dreamcatcher, donated by Chris Shelton.

16. MEETING ADJOURNED: *MSC to adjourn at 9:18 pm.*

17. NEXT MEETING: **TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 2019**, 7:00 pm,
Maritime Labour Centre.

No Pizza Educational

The VDLC will not be holding pizza educationals. An educational component has been added to the meeting. Guests are always welcome to attend VDLC Regular meetings to observe.

Please visit website for event listings and more – www.vdlc.ca

For lists of happenings please see our website events page.