



**REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2020**

1. LOCATION: ZOOM Video Conference – 7:00PM

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: 2nd Vice President Graham O'Neill

3. NOTICE OF VDLC POLICY ON HARASSMENT: Circulated prior to meeting

4. ADOPTION OF MEETING AGENDA

M/S/C that the agenda of the October 20, 2020 Regular meeting be adopted.

5. ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

M/S/C that the minutes of the September 15, 2020 Regular meeting be adopted.

6. CREDENTIALS:

CUPE Local 15
Debbie Mohabir

IATSE Local 118
Randall Fox

CUPE Local 2278
Gillian Glass

Teachers' Federation Employees Union
(TFEU)
Sarah Young

7. OBLIGATION OF NEW DELEGATES: Pledge of New Delegates

8. GUEST SPEAKERS: Neal Adolph, United Way of the Lower Mainland

Carli and Robert Birungi

Carli – For a community to be truly great it has to be great for everyone. In Uganda, where we come from, a strong connected community is so vital to our culture. Everyone looks out for each other's children and neighbours and their overall wellbeing. A real life example that it really does take a village to raise a child.

Robert – When we first moved here 5 years ago to British Columbia, I was surprised to learn that most people didn't even know their neighbours. In fact, research shows that 1 in 5 people don't know their neighbours enough to ask for help.

Carli – And this doesn't just impact us, it really affects our community. And when just one of us is not cared for or embraced it really hurts us all. We have been sponsored by Boyd & Global Executive Search to share our story with you. In Uganda, Robert and I were in a community outreach program for children and youth and women in very vulnerable

situations. But, due to a threat against our family's safety we moved to Uganda with our five boys. Even though I was born in BC, I really, really struggled adjusting back to life here after being away for 12 years. I felt really lonely at times and sometimes I could even go outside my front door and not even see one person, especially as the weather got colder I found this more challenging. This not only affected us, but it affected our boys. Sure they made friends in school, but outside of school they were really struggling to build meaningful relationships.

Robert – While I love playing soccer with my boys, one thing I realized that here not many people use facilities which is not like where I come from. All you need is a soccer ball outside and many are ready to join you and play, which brings the community together.

Carli – We do have after school programs in our area, but after talking to many parents we found that many cannot afford financially to put their children in these programs. As I want to support my husband, I put a post on social media and the response was huge. We heard from the United Way and received our local love grant.

Robert – With the United Way's help, our program reached another level. We were provided with a lot of equipment and snacks which helped our kids. Our program not only teaches soccer skills, but we teach our kids how to be good leaders in their community, we teach them confidence and so many other things.

Carli – Unfortunately, not everything has been that great. On one of our first sessions an individual in our community drove past and started shouting horrible racist slurs against my husband because of the colour of his skin. Shouting at him repeatedly to go back to where he came from. He didn't only come to this one session, he started coming to every one of our drop in sessions. He didn't care that children were present, he didn't really care about anything. He just wanted to make his presence known and to intimidate my husband so that he would feel unwelcome. This was a very hard time for my husband and my boys and it was very disheartening to see that this type of thing happened here.

Robert – To be honest, I was very overwhelmed. I was in a new country getting used to a new way of life. I wasn't expecting this. These attacks didn't only happen to me, but to the children of colour who were present at every training session. The kids became very upset and as a community leader it was my responsibility to explain that this man needed help.

Carli – The news of these unfortunate events spread really quickly, but in a great way. Together with the United Way, our MP, Mayor and City Councillors and neighbours from far and wide, all came out to show my husband that this one individual does not represent the way that everyone else feels about him. He is truly a loved and embraced person in our community. Our Mayor even went above and beyond and he did a rally of love and this meant a lot to my family who had been going through such a difficult time. It was also an extremely important reminder that every single person, no matter where they come from or what they believe, deserves to feel safe in their community. And on the ground, with the United Way, this is what local love really looks like.

Robert – Before Covid, we had over sixty kids show up for our program. All of these kids came from different backgrounds in our community. It was really very nice that the United Way brought together our community. Despite what happened to me, I felt that I was very welcomed and felt at home. And that is how a community should be.

Carli – Thanks to the United Way and donors like you, our family feels embraced in our new community. You are the reason that we are able to provide children with safe play, positive role models and most importantly, hope. Because of your support, we are able to reach out to more children and families, both on and off the field. You are truly changing lives.

Robert – We truly believe it does take a community to raise a child and together we can achieve this.

Carli – United Way made it possible for us deliver our community building soccer drop in program. Because of your generosity, they were able to help so many families and children in need. From the bottom of your hearts we sincerely thank you.

Robert – Together we can make our communities stronger. So from neighbour to neighbour we ask you to show your love and please give generously. Thank you.

9. EDUCATIONAL: Nil

10. PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

President Stephen von Sychowski reported on activities since the September 2020 meeting.

COVID-19

A reminder that the remainder of our meetings for 2020 will be held via Zoom due to COVID-19. Our office remains open, but we are not hosting gatherings or meetings. Please call ahead if you plan to come by as I am generally working from home and both Liz and I also have meetings and other commitments which can sometimes mean nobody is in office at a given time.

Political Action

Since the last meeting, Bal Sandhu and I have met with the Coalition of Progressive Electors, Green Party of Vancouver, and OneCity for a mid-term touch-base. I also attended two meetings with unions representing workers at VSB; one with the Green Trustees and one where all Trustees were invited. These were to discuss various issues ongoing at VSB.

Our Political Action Committee will be meeting next month to discuss the possibility of a By-Election due to allegations of conflict of interest being leveled against Councilor Wiebe, and to begin planning for the 2022 election.

The Municipal Engagement Committee has been hard at work, now Chaired by Bal. I will let him speak to what it has in the works.

There have been some important motions in recent weeks at Vancouver City Council, including:

- Making Home (voted down)
- Tenant Protections
- SRO report and vacancy control
- Housing the unsheltered

We are seeing some stronger direction and leadership particularly on housing issues from the Mayor's Office and I think we can expect to continue to see that for the duration of the term in light of widespread frustration over what is seen as often a directionless Council due to the political disunity that exists there.

OneCity will be hosting a listening forum for union members soon, we will circulate this information so that you can attend if you are a Vancouver resident interested in an opportunity to meet with representatives of this rising progressive and pro-labour party and sharing your perspectives and concerns about municipal politics.

Of course, we are in the midst of a provincial election campaign. We are actively engaged in this, within the confines of the BC Elections Act. We are not a registered third party and will not be spending on election advertising. It is crucial that we secure an NDP majority government in this election.

BCFED Convention

The BCFED Convention will take place virtually on November 25/26. We will be sending our two delegates and one young worker delegate.

DTES Joint Union Committee

The committee has been working on concerns around proper communication of COVID cases in the DTES to unions and agencies. Work with the Minister of Health's office was derailed by the election call. The committee has taken a hiatus until post-election and will then reconvene and assess next steps.

Labour Education

Our Fall program continues to roll out successfully, with the exception of any in-person offerings. We did have to cancel our Accommodation course this month as well because of low attendance. Meanwhile the Zoom courses are all registering well, some exceptionally well. I believe we will need to transition all courses to Zoom until a vaccine is widely available and I will work with the facilitators to continue that process.

SWELL

The tentatively named Society for Worker Education and Labour Learning will hold its founding meeting early next month. This is the new organization which will look at online curriculum development and delivery as well as other virtual learning tools.

BC Employment Standards Coalition

The Coalition continues to work on its paid sick day campaign. The basis of unity discussion is also ongoing, with some good feedback at the most recent meeting and plans to conclude the discussion and adopt the new document at the next meeting.

United Way

The United Way of the Lower Mainland Labour Appreciation Night will be on December 4 at 6pm. It will be an online event, full details including ticket costs will be coming soon. As you know, we will present Adrienne Smith with the Syd Thompson Community Service Award. The other award winners will be as follows:

- United Way of the Lower Mainland – Joe Morris Labour Community Service Award
Recipients: Sussanne Skidmore, Secretary-Treasurer at BC Federation of Labour
Nikki Hill, Principal at Earncliffe Strategy Group
- New Westminster & District Labour Council – Labour Community Service Award
Recipient: Walter Gerlach, Directing Business Representative at IAM Northwest
District 250
- Fraser Valley Labour Council – Brian Harder Labour Leadership Award
Recipient: Bruce Temple, Union Representative at UFCW 1518

YVR Joint Union Committee

The YVR Joint Union Committee will be meeting soon with new CEO Tamara Vrooman and new Vice President of Human Resources, Richard Beed. The top issue of concern right now is protecting jobs in light of the COVID pandemic's impact on the travel and tourism industry.

Ledcor LTS Strike

On September 30 we saw the one-year anniversary of the IBEW 213 strike for a fair collective agreement at Ledcor LTS. There were solidarity events held both by us and by NWDLC on that day. Thank you to Shane Polak for speaking on our behalf as I could not attend due to illness.

Metro Vancouver Alliance

Metro Vancouver Alliance held a relatively successful AGM on September 22. Nearly 50 people from various member organizations were present. The labour organizations in MVA are VDLC, BCFED, BCGEU, ATU 1724, CUPE 23 (Burnaby Civic Employees), CUPE Metro, HEU, PSAC Vancouver District Council, and UNITE HERE Local 40. United Way of the Lower Mainland is also a member.

MVA's plan of action for rebuilding was adopted by the delegates, and it includes a plan for raising funds to hire a new full-time organizer. That individual would be Audrey Guay, a young woman who has played an important role in keeping MVA alive during this recent difficult time and certainly in my view appears to have the skills and temperament for the job.

Committees

The Young Workers Committee is coming along well. We have now had two meetings and a third one is on that way. At this third meeting we will engage in a planning session and hold elections for Chair and Co-Chair. We have had a very good group of young workers from various unions in attendance.

On October 13 we held our first meeting to discuss the possibility of a new anti-racism committee. There was strong interest expressed in the meeting, but not too many could make it that night due to a variety of factors including the storm that day which left many without electricity, and the unexpected conflict with the leaders debate. We are hosting a second meeting to continue the discussion on October 27 from 6:30-8:00PM via Zoom.

Events Attended

September 16 – Webinar: Confronting Racism and Addressing Human Rights in a Pandemic
September 17 – BC Labour Code course
September 17 – United Way meeting
September 18 – Metro Vancouver Alliance AGM planning
September 18 – Meeting with Coalition of Progressive Electors
September 21 – Meeting with Green Party of Vancouver
September 21 – United Way of the Lower Mainland Labour Committee of the Board
September 21 – Society for Worker Education and Labour Learning planning meeting
September 21 – Metro Vancouver Alliance AGM planning
September 21 – United Way meeting
September 22 – Sustainable Communities Initiative UBCM Resolution Briefing
September 22 – DTES Joint Union Committee
September 22 – Meeting with CUPW and Christine Boyle
September 22 – Meeting with BCFED and Christine Boyle
September 22 – Metro Vancouver Alliance AGM
September 23 – BC Poverty Reduction Coalition platform review
September 23 – BCFED Community Social Action Committee
September 23 – Meeting with OneCity
September 24 – Employer Policies and Labour Law course
September 24 – The Housing Crisis and COVID-19 event
September 26-27 – Steward Level 1 course (facilitated)
September 28 – BCFED Climate Action Working Group
September 28 – VDLC Young Workers Committee
September 29 – Investigations & Interrogations course
September 29 – BC Employment Standards Coalition
September 30 – National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (Orange Shirt Day)
October 1 – BCFED Executive Council
October 1 – United Way Transformation Kick Off
October 1 – United Way of the Lower Mainland Board of Directors
October 2 – United Way of the Lower Mainland Board of Directors
October 3 – BCFED Organizing Institute course
October 4 – BCFED Organizing Institute course
October 5 – CLC Pacific Region Labour Council Touch-Base
October 6 – VDLC affiliates and Green Party VSB Trustees
October 6 – Vancouver City Council – Protect Tenants Motion
October 7 – Vancouver City Council – SRO Report
October 7 – United Way Campaign Cabinet Labour Committee
October 8 – VDLC affiliates and VSB Trustees
October 13 – Anti-Racism Meeting
October 14 – United Way of the Lower Mainland Campaign Cabinet
October 14 – United Way Joint Board Integration Committee
October 15 – Executive Board
October 17 – Labour as a Force for Peace and International Solidarity course
October 20 – The Road Ahead: Transit in Metro Vancouver
October 20 – Regular Meeting

M/S/C to adopt President's report.

11. TREASURER'S REPORT:

Treasurer Stefan Nielsen is not present. President Stephen von Sychowski reported on financials since the September 2020 meeting.

M/S/C to adopt the Treasurer's Report.

12. CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS REPORT:

Ron Stipp reported on the Canadian Labour Congress since the September 2020 meeting.

I'll be very brief. We talked about the provincial election a bit. The CLC is a third party advertiser and we are doing online stuff in target ridings. If you're in a target riding, you've probably seen our stuff. We've also done a bunch of emails out to folks as well as text messaging coming this week as we get closer to Saturday.

It's a very, very important election. I hope everyone has voted or will; the advance poll goes to Thursday. Please get out there. For the labour movement it's very important. If we get a BC Liberal government, it will be outrageous. What we really need is a majority NDP government because we could not get some of the labour legislation we wanted through that last minority government because the Green Party does not support progressive labour legislation. It's something very important for us to think about; get out there and vote.

There is a possibility that the Federal Government could fall tomorrow. We would be into a federal election immediately. I don't know what is going to happen; they are burning the midnight oil tonight to get a deal on this committee vote that's happening. They are trying to set up a super committee to take a look at the WE stuff and it's a confidence motion. We could wake up in the morning and be in an election.

On the Forward Together Campaign the major thing is a Member of Parliament lobby from November 2-6 or thereabouts. We have six MP's we'd like you to lobby; Jonathan Wilkinson, Hedy Fry, Jody Wilson-Raybould, Joyce Murray, Harjit Sajjan and Patrick Wheeler. I know Stephen has already started to try and get appointments with them. If you live in any of these six Liberal and Independent ridings, let Stephen know. We'll need 2-3 people; it will all be virtual. We need someone from the riding in each one of those.

The most important is that the Winter School is on, but not at Harrison. It will be a virtual Winter School. It will be 4 weeks beginning on January 11 to February 4. We'll be doing 4-5 courses per week. There won't be some of the higher level courses. We'll be having between 15-16 people per course. It will probably book up very quickly and will not cost too much.

M/S/C to adopt the Canadian Labour Congress Report.

13. CORRESPONDENCE:

Circulated prior to the meeting.

M/S/C that the correspondence be received and filed for the information of the delegates.

14. EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS:

a) *M/S/C that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: Spending Authorizations

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

- Royal Canadian Legion, Remembrance Day wreath - \$85
- Renew membership in Metro Vancouver Alliance - \$1,000

15. REPORT OF UNIONS: Submitted in writing in order to be included on meeting minutes.

No reports

M/S/ to adopt the report of unions.

16. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES: Nil

OTHER REPORTS:

BC Forum – Report by Agnes Jackman

BC Forum put out a special BC Election edition of the Advocate which can be viewed on our Website www.bcforum.ca

There were email blasts to our members re Voting Safety, a summary of the NDP platform, and the United Nations International Day of Older Persons (UNIDOP).

Diane Wood, BC Forum's President, in advance of the C.P.P. Investment's public meeting for BC, which was held yesterday by Zoom webinar, submitted a question which was answered at the event. It regarded the Liberals' promised increase to C.P.P. Survivor Benefit, which was supposed to be implemented in July. The answer was basically that any increase would be debated by the Federal & Provincial Finance Ministers. So, we know who to lobby to move this issue to the front burner, as it seems it is currently on the back burner!

BC Forum sent a letter on this issue on Aug 12, 2020 to the Federal Minister of Finance as well as the PM and the Minister for Seniors. It also will go to the BC Minister of Finance once the election is over and we know who the Minister of Finance will be. This letter can be viewed on our website www.bcforum.ca on the Action page.

17. REPORTS OF LABOUR COUNCIL APPOINTED REPRESENTATIVES: Nil

18. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Nil

19. ELECTION AND INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS: **Open Nominations**

President – Stephen von Sychowski

1st Vice President – Bal Sandhu

2nd President – Nick Aubichon

Recording Secretary – Karen McVeigh

Treasurer – Stefan Neilsen

Members at Large – Ashley Duncan, Shane Polack, Jason Woods, Lauren Bowles, Frank Warwick, Mike Logan, Michael Ma (ineligible), Jason Sullivan, Russ St. Eloi, Nikki Koutsochilis.

Trustees – Graham O’Neill, Carol Nordby

20. NEW BUSINESS: Nil

21. NOTICE OF MOTION: Nil

22. GOOD AND WELFARE:

Karen McVeigh – Moment of Silence. Sometime today or yesterday there was a worker killed while pruning an oak tree in Victoria.

23. MEETING ADJOURNED: *M/S/C to adjourn at 8:45pm.*

24. NEXT MEETING: **TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2020** at 7:00 pm

Zoom Video Conference.



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