



**REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 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 Bal Shandhu

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

4. ADOPTION OF MEETING AGENDA

M/S/C that the agenda of the December 8, 2020 Regular meeting be adopted.

5. ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

M/S/C that the minutes of the November 17, 2020 Regular meeting be adopted.

6. CREDENTIALS:

CUPE Local 15

Subrata Dasgupta

Donna Petersen

Cynthia Schadt

Tahmi Yazdanyar

BCTF – VESTA

Chloe McKnight (Alt)

UFCW Local 1518

Patrick Johnson

7. OBLIGATION OF NEW DELEGATES: Pledge of New Delegates

8. GUEST SPEAKERS: Nil

9. EDUCATIONAL: Nil

10. PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

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

COVID-19

All meetings in the first quarter of 2021 will be held via Zoom. We will review after that time.

Office Closure & Vacation

Our office will be closed during the week of December 20.

Political Action

Our Political Action Committee met and began discussing strategy for a possible By-Election, and for the 2022 Municipal Elections.

I have also been working with municipal locals on a number of local issues including opposing possible contracting out at a new park development, and the 2021 budget.

Our Municipal Engagement Committee met as well and discussed issues around housing and the opioid crisis. The motion on shelter and housing today flows from that meeting.

We supported Mayor Stewart's motion on decriminalizing personal possession of drugs, which passed unanimously at Council. This is an excellent step toward de-stigmatization and harm reduction. The city will now request the necessary exemption from the Federal Government in order to make this a reality. It is my understanding that the Mayor's Office fully expects the exemption to be granted.

It also notable that our new BC NDP majority government was sworn in this month, and new/returning Ministers were appointed. I'm sure we all look forward to working with our new MLA's and Ministers to move forward workers issues and interests during this term.

BCFED Convention

This week the BC Federation of Labour held their 59th Constitutional Convention.

The Federation's convention was held online this year as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and was executed very successfully. The VDLC sent its own convention delegates to participate in the proceedings, and many other VDLC delegates and Executive Board members participated as representatives of their own unions.

There were also many VDLC-submitted resolutions amongst the numerous reports and resolutions that were heard and approved by the convention. These included Resolution 182 - Safe Supply and Decriminalization, Composite Resolution 174A - Affordable Housing, Resolution 203 - Driving Public, Resolution 204 - AccessBC, and Resolution 208 - #Vote16BC. These motions can be found in the convention book. All other motions will go to the Executive Council.

Laird Cronk and Sussanne Skidmore were re-elected by acclamation to the roles of President and Secretary-Treasurer respectively.

Five Labour Council representatives to the BCFED Executive Council were also elected, including DJ Pohl from Fraser Valley Labour Council, Lois Rugg from the Kamloops & District Labour Council, Miyuki Shinkai from the Sunshine Coast Labour Council, Sam Raven from Kitimat-Terrace District Labour Council, and myself.

Labour Education

By the time of this month's Executive Board meeting our 2020 Program will be complete. We had a good year for Labour Education, despite the challenges of the pandemic. Our 2021 Program will be released shortly!

T-Shirts

We will be releasing a new t-shirt via pre-order early in the New Year – stay tuned!

WELLS

WELLS is currently filing for society status and will meet again in February. In the meantime, our Facilitators & Participant Experience and Curriculum working groups are working on proposals for next steps. In January we will host some training on facilitating via Zoom for VDLC facilitators who wish to participate. Details coming soon.

United Way

The Labour Appreciation Night took place on December 3 online.

Events Attended / Dates of Note

November 18 – Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives Fundraiser
November 18- Portland Hotel Society AGM
November 19 – Political Action Committee
November 19 – Worker Education and Labour Learning Society directors meeting
November 20 – Municipal Engagement Committee
November 20 – Cascade Region Labour Leadership Initiative gathering
November 20 – City of Vancouver Peninsula Working Group
November 21 – 131st Anniversary of the VDLC
November 23 – Meeting with CUPE 1004 and COPE Park Board Commissioners
November 23 – BC Employment Standards Coalition Basis of United Working Group
November 24 – BC Federation of Labour Convention Information Seminar
November 24 – United Way Joint Board Integration Committee
November 24 – Oath Ceremony – BC NDP Caucus
November 24 – United Way of the Lower Mainland Board of Directors
November 25 – BC Federation of Labour Convention
November 25 – Metro Vancouver Alliance Bridging the Gap event
November 26 – BC Federation of Labour Convention
November 26 – BC Government Cabinet Ceremony
November 26 – Labour Council meeting re: President Yussuff endorsement of Morneau
November 27 – Meeting with Mayor’s Office
November 27 – Meeting with CUPE 1004 and Green Park Board Commissioners
November 28 – Labour as a Force for Peace and International Solidarity
November 30 – VDLC Anti-Racism Committee
December 1 – VDLC Downtown Eastside Joint Union Committee
December 1 – Canadian Labour Congress/United Way meeting
December 1 – VDLC Housing Action Team
December 2 – “The Gig is Up” screening
December 2 – VDLC Executive Board
December 2 – Trade Unions for Energy Democracy, Labour and Climate Roundtable planning
December 3 – Advocacy: How to Make Your Case Effectively
December 3 – International Day of People with Disabilities, BCFED event
December 3 – United Way of the Lower Mainland Labour Appreciation Night
December 4 – Advocacy: How to Make Your Case Effectively
December 7 – VDLC Political Action Committee
December 7 – Worker Education and Labour Learning, working group meeting
December 7 – BC Employment Standards Coalition, Basis of Unity Working Group
December 8 – United Way of the Lower Mainland Campaign Cabinet Labour Committee
December 8 – Living Wage for Families Campaign meeting

December 8 – United Way Joint Board Integration Committee
December 8 – Master Trade Union Group collective agreement ratification meeting
December 8 – Regular meeting

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

19. ELECTION AND INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS: NIL

11. TREASURER'S REPORT:

Treasurer Stefan Nielsen reported on financials since the November 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 November 2020 meeting.

A number of issues. Just on Federal Politics; you all know that we had a fiscal update last Monday with little new included. Not very much was mentioned on health care; there was a quasi-announcement but with little money attached. Absolutely no mention of Pharmacare which is disappointing. Some decent things on extended programs for small business and working people but nothing extremely exciting. Parliament actually ends this week and then that's it for the Christmas break. They're back January 25th.

Thursday is a very important day; there is a first minister's conference on health care discussing \$28 million which the provinces want. The vaccine rollout will also be discussed. Good news I think. Provincially there was an announcement that 4,000 people will be given the vaccine next week, which is a start.

Federal Election, and there will be more on this next month. The working group will be meeting this Thursday morning. We are looking at a federal election called late February.

CLC Winter School – online virtual school is pretty much full. It filled up extremely quickly. It's given us ideas that when we can go back to Harrison that we can possibly extend this to a summer virtual session. Not this coming summer. We'll see how this goes. We're confident that we'll be back at Harrison in the winter of 2022 and it will be bigger than ever. Demand will be high due to courses not being offered this winter. We are doing the political evenings; short sessions with political leaders with subjects as long term care, addiction and poverty, and women and covid. They'll be interesting sessions for those who wish to attend in the evening.

The CLC Convention, which we've talked about. I believe there will be an announcement soon; it looks like June. It will be done like the BC FED Convention.

Municipal By-Elections; There is soon to be a by-election in Richmond. It's an important one for our affiliates and the labour council. It's important that we got involved. This seat will be open.

Just a bit on COVID. We were planning on heading back to work in a normal way but that's not happening now. There has been good news on vaccines and the numbers in BC starting to trend down after a terrible spike. We still have problems in certain areas around the country. Possibly by the fall we'll be able to be in a room together but I don't see us getting together until at least the fall.

Everyone have a great holiday season and we'll see everyone in January.

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: Shelter and Housing for All

BECAUSE shelter capacity in the City of Vancouver is currently down 30% due to physical distancing measures required due to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

BECAUSE there is an increased need for emergency shelter as a result of impacts of the pandemic; and

BECAUSE as we continue through the cold, wet Fall and Winter months the need to ensure shelter for all our residents becomes and increasingly urgent matter of public health and safety; and

BECAUSE housing is a human right,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL continue to support the City of Vancouver's efforts to obtain, through lease or purchase, the necessary shelter space to accommodate all unhoused residents; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL call upon the City, the Province, BC Housing, and relief agencies to work together to do all that is necessary to ensure shelter for all who need it, and to make every effort to transition all unhoused residents to appropriate permanent housing with the necessary wrap around services as soon as possible.

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

Subject: Federal Governments Safe Start Agreement

BECAUSE the Federal Government's Safe Restart Agreement (SRA) promises \$19 billion to provinces and territories for the safe restart of economies and to promote resiliency in light of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

BECAUSE these funds are to address seven priority areas, of which support for municipalities is one; and

BECAUSE the SRA states that "Municipalities are on the front lines of a safe restart of the economy and will need to put in place appropriate precautions to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and manage public spaces and critical services, like public transit. The Government of Canada will contribute up to \$2 billion to support municipalities with COVID-19 operating costs for the next six to eight months. Provincial and territorial governments will continue to support municipalities and will cost-match federal supports with investments made this fiscal year. In addition, the Government of Canada will also cost-match more than \$2.3 billion to support any additional provincial/territorial contributions for public transit."; and

BECAUSE some of these funds have already been dispensed to municipalities, via the province, and access to additional funds is anticipated in the near future; and BECAUSE the previously dispensed funds were provided using a distribution metric developed by the Provincial Government that disproportionately saw federal money going to small municipalities, leaving cities like Vancouver receiving less money per capita than other similar sized cities across Canada,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL call upon the Provincial Government to ensure the fair and equitable distribution of SRA funds to municipalities which gives due consideration to population density and alleviating pandemic-related funding shortfalls; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL call upon municipalities to ensure that these funds are used to support crucial public services, and the workers who provide them, including library workers, parks and recreation staff, 311 operators, City Hall workers, support staff answering public inquires, engineering, planning, and development staff, firefighters, as well as workers involved in operating water, sewage, waste collection, and other systems. It also includes direct service providers, including those providing critical services to vulnerable communities like Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

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

No written reports submitted

M/S/ to adopt the report of unions.

16. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES: Nil

OTHER REPORTS: Nil

M/S/C to adopt reports of committees

17. REPORTS OF LABOUR COUNCIL APPOINTED REPRESENTATIVES:

BC FORUM – Agnes Jackman

The prime focus of BCForum remain to be:

- a) **Pension Security:** Scott Duvall, MP, has had a private member's bill, Bill C-259 on bankruptcy protection, for the last couple of years that continues to be re-introduced with each sitting of the house. This protection is particularly important during these COVID times.
- b) **Universal National Public Pharmacare** is of particular focus because the bill regarding this will be voted on by the federal government in February 2021. The pharmacy companies are staying strong in their opposition to Pharmacare. So, we must stay strong in support of it.
- c) **Seniors Care:** Asking for National Standards for Long Term Care facilities. We also want much better support for Home Support, which we want publicly delivered as well. Early in December, Canadian premiers will meet with Prime Minister Trudeau for a first ministers meeting dedicated to long term care. There is an on-line petition on this offered by CMA Health Advocates.

Immunization: BCForum is encouraging its membership, and seniors in general, to stay up to date with all their recommended shots, especially during these COVID times.

BCForum Membership: Thanks to Stephen for email sent out by the VDLC to invite BC Fed union members, past or present, 50 or better, to take out membership in BCForum.

BCForum's Winter Edition of the Advocate is now available and can be views on our website at www.bcforum.ca

18. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Nil

19. ELECTION AND INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS:

One vacancy exists for a Trustee - Call for nominations

Nominations closed.

20. NEW BUSINESS: Nil

21. NOTICE OF MOTION: Nil

22. GOOD AND WELFARE:

Russ St. Eloi – We are all in favour of affordable housing. The concept of affordable housing to someone on welfare means one set of prices; the concept of someone making \$120,000 a year is completely different. We need to have a distinct concept of affordable housing. Secondly, a while back we sent a letter to the President of the CLC regarding his support of Morneau as secretary-general of OECD. Have we received any reply? (Stephen von Sychowski – We have not received a reply). Lastly, for Ron – an Australian coal company has been given the ok to take the top of a mountain off in Alberta for metallurgical coal. It will be shipped through BC for countries in Asia. It will destroy ground water and the surrounding area and if we support the environment and environmental causes we should pay attention to this.

Stephanie Smith – a shameful decision was made today by the Finance Minister to reduce the monthly pandemic payment to persons with disabilities in BC from \$300 per month to \$150 a month and to set an expiry date of March 31, 2021. I hope we can consider speaking to this as an organization at our next meeting.

Neal Adolph/United Way of the Lower Mainland - Last week we had the Labour Appreciation Event. We were able to record the event and it will be online for anyone who did not have the chance to see it. We are providing 2 classes at winter school (week 2 and 4). Both are great courses and if you're interested in taking either I'll post a link in the chat. I will also post a link for BC211 training this Saturday you are more than welcome to. It is free.

23. MEETING ADJOURNED: *M/S/C to adjourn at 8:36pm.*

24. NEXT MEETING: **TUESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2021** at 7:00 pm
Zoom Video Conference.



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