



VANCOUVER and DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL



REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING TUESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2013

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

2. **CHAIRPERSON:** Terry Engler, 1st Vice President

3. **ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:**

MSC that the minutes of the December 11, 2012 meeting be adopted.

4. **CREDENTIALS:**

The following credentials were received since the last meeting: (* = recredentialled, A = alternate)

BCGEU Local 303

Stephen Wagner

CUPE Local 4078 (Air Canada Component)

Tanya Paterson

Michael Reed

Julie Roberts

Heat & Frost Insulators Local 118

Neil Munro

MSC to obligate/seat the delegate(s).

5. **GUEST SPEAKER(S):**

a) Jinny Sims, MP Citizenship and Immigration Critic re: Temporary Foreign Workers

Jinny thanked the VDLC for the opportunity to talk about Temporary Foreign Workers. She stated that, in short, the program is a mess. In 2011, 200,000 temporary foreign worker permits were granted in Canada. Permits are being granted in areas that make no sense, for example, fast food outlets. The Canadian government says they believe in a free market; they want to give free market options to employers who then say they can't get workers to work for \$10 or \$12 an hour, so what should happen in a free market system is the employer would then pay competitive wage to attract workers. Instead, the Harper government is using the temporary foreign worker policy to bring in cheap labour. They have passed legislation enabling employers to pay temporary foreign workers 15% less than Canadian workers and do not have to provide long-term benefits that they have to provide to Canadian workers. Temporary foreign workers are more pliable and controllable and often face deplorable living condition. Recently the Excel food plant was shut down due to contaminated meat, 1/3 of the workers in that plant were temporary foreign workers and a large number of those do not have adequate training. In this case

there were a number of health and safety issues that, as temporary foreign workers, they couldn't give voice to. The situation put the health of Canadians at risk, at no fault of the workers but of the government who allows it. The priority needs to be growing the workforce here. Where is the training? Where are the apprenticeships? Both the federal and provincial governments have failed in investing in skills development. In the mines, the jobs being given to temporary foreign workers are not short term jobs. They are at least 7 to 9 year terms; realistically they are 30 year jobs. Temporary means on the outside 6 months anything beyond that is no longer a temporary job. The abuse these workers are subjected to is intolerable. Recruiters illegally charge exorbitant amounts and then when workers arrive here they often aren't paid their full salary as the recruiter takes a percentage. Canada has created third world conditions for certain groups of people. The government has developed accelerated labour assessment and relies on the honesty of employer. Only when there is a complaint by Canadian workers who say they could've done those jobs or a union takes up the issue does the government look into it. Another huge issue which ties in with the temporary foreign worker issues is that of live-in caregivers, around which there are innumerable issues.

There are some major flaws with the temporary foreign worker policy that need to be addressed. One, if you are good enough to work here, you're good enough to live here; second, if it is truly short term that we need additional skill sets, than by all means, but there needs to be skills development here so that everyone here can have access to those jobs; and thirdly, before we go outside looking for workers, we need to exhaust the pool of workers here looking for jobs.

b) David Fairey, Trade Union Research Bureau (TURB)

VDLC President Joey Hartman introduced Brother Fairey, long-time director of the Trade Union Research Bureau with Ted Byrne and Susan Lockhart. After 75 years of services to the labour and social justice movements, TURB is closing their doors. A reception was held prior to the meeting to honour them and their years of service. They've been good friends to the VDLC and they will be missed.

David thanked the labour council for the event earlier in the evening. He also thanked the labour council for the contribution VDLC President Joey Hartman is making to the BC Employment Standards Coalition. There is a campaign to improve the BC Employment Standards Act, in particular to protect temporary foreign workers. Brother Fairey acknowledged the work of UFCW in their organizing of temporary foreign workers. The campaign the coalition is advocating is the development of improved protections and a proactive employment standards branch. They want to reach out beyond the labour movement and stated the need for an advocacy centre for unorganized workers in Vancouver, which is a project of his which he hopes to see the labour council a part of. He has enjoyed working with the VDLC over the years and he hopes, despite the closing of TURB's doors, that friendship will continue.

6. PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Joey Hartman reported on VDLC activities since the December 11, 2012 meeting.

Queen Alexandra School

On December 13, the VDLC participated in a formal ribbon cutting to open the new free store at Queen Alexandra School called "The Wishing Tree". There were a number of families and school staff and a communications officer and senior staff member from the VSB head office.

The free store will provide clothing and food to families. Each package will have a small insert about the labour council and a binder of employment standards fact sheets in various languages was provided for parents to understand their workplace rights.

The VDLC raised \$11,000 in 2012, which was matched by the Vancouver Sun Adopt a School program. For 2013, we hope to repeat this success with a fundraising dinner with keynote speaker Jim Stanford (CAW senior economist) on Friday, April 26, 2013.

International Affairs

A December meeting with a delegation from the Beijing Municipal Federation of Trade Unions was very positive. They are eager to have the VDLC organize an exchange delegation in the fall of 2013 or early 2014. They are also hoping that the VDLC will organize some training for a group of their leadership in the fall.

CLC Labour Council Task Force

The CLC has a national task force on labour councils that was created as part of a structural review approved by the 2011 CLC Convention. The resolution that was adopted reads (in part) that there will be a Commission on Structural Review that will "review the structure, the role, the finances, the capacity and the effectiveness of labour councils and federations of labour." The task force will be in Vancouver on January 29 and local union presidents have been invited to a meeting that evening. The consultation process will conclude March 2013 and recommendations to the national Canadian Council will follow.

Metro Vancouver Alliance

The VDLC is a founding organization of this coalition of faith, labour and community organizations working for the common good. The Industrial Areas Foundation model, that MVA follows, builds leadership before program. The objective is to spend the first few years developing trust and training leaders, before formally launching a campaign. Progress is steady and unions now make up 1/3 of the MVA membership.

***MSC to suspend the regular order of business to open nominations
to the 2013 VDLC Executive Board.***

7. NOMINATIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD:

1st Call for nominations to the VDLC Executive, nominations presided over by Terry Engler, 1st Vice President and Chair of the VDLC, delegate for ILWU Local 400.

In order to eligible for nomination delegates must have been a delegate for a minimum of 1 year and have attended 6 of 11 meetings in the year preceding election.

The following persons were nominated (in order of nomination):

Executive Position	Nominee Name	Union Represented
<i>President</i>	Joey Hartman	CEP Local 468
<i>1st Vice President</i>	Terry Engler	ILWU Local 400
<i>2nd Vice President</i>	Stephen Von Sychowski	COPE Local 378
<i>Recording Secretary</i>	Georgi Bates	USWA Local 2009
<i>Treasurer</i>	Paul Sihota	IAFF Local 18 (Vancouver Fire Fighters)
<i>Members at Large (12 positions)</i>	Agnes Jackman	HSA
	Sylvia Metze	BCTF - VSTA
	Carol Nordby	CUPE Local 389
	Graham O'Neill	HEU – North Shore Community
	Kassandra Cordero	UFCW Local 1518
	Tim Cheung	CAW Local 2002
	Russ St. Eloi	UA Plumbers Local 170
	Fruma Sloan	CUPW
	Matt Damario	BCGEU 1203
Gary Jarvis	CUPE Local 391	

** Please note that the second and final call for nominations will take place at the February 19 meeting and will be immediately followed by elections. **

8. CORRESPONDENCE:

See attached list

9. EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS:

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

Subject: Donations and Spending Approvals

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

- Doxa Film Festival Program Advertisement - at a cost of \$100.00
- Employment Standards Act Coalition – meeting space rental at Maritime Labour Centre – up to \$500.00 for the 2013 calendar year

- First Call Annual Fundraising Dinner January 31st – 2 tickets at \$50.00 each for a total cost of \$100.00
- CCPA BC Gala Dinner Fundraiser with Joel Bakan – 2 tickets at \$85.00 each for a total cost of \$170.00

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

Subject: Solidarity With CUPW

BECAUSE the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) has been under attack for their participation in a World Social Forum as part of their international solidarity actions, which are funded through a negotiated fund; and

BECAUSE this attack in part of a broader assault on unions, their finances and activities,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL add its name to the list of individuals and organizations acting in solidarity with CUPW against unfounded accusations that they are using their international solidarity funds for inappropriate activities.

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

Subject: Idle No More

BECAUSE First Nations across Canada are rising up to assert their rights against regressive actions of the federal, provincial and territorial governments; and

BECAUSE a movement called Idle No More has arisen as a result of the federal government's recent omnibus Bill C-45, which amends the Navigable Waters Protection Act to allow the government to approve projects on more than 160 lakes without consulting First Nations, and also makes changes to the Indian Act that make it easier to lease reserve land for economic development without consulting band residents; and

BECAUSE the CLC, CEP, CAW, CUPE, BCGEU and other labour organizations have expressed their solidarity with Chief Theresa Spence of the Attawapiskat First Nation during her hunger strike to demand an audience with Prime Minister Stephen Harper to discuss conditions on her reserve and government actions that compromise First Nations communities, land and water,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL support, promote and participate in activities of the "Idle No More" movement.

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

Subject: Scholarship for Labour Council Development 1 at CLC Winter School

BECAUSE the CLC is offering all labour councils in the Pacific Region a scholarship to attend the introductory labour council development course; and

BECAUSE the scholarship does not cover wage loss or transportation; and

BECAUSE the VDLC education fund has a surplus available to complement the CLC scholarship,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL designate Gary Jarvis as the recipient for the CLC scholarship and further will provide Brother Jarvis with a scholarship of up to \$300.00 to cover one-half of his wage loss and transportation with his local CUPE 391 covering the other half.

10. REPORT OF UNIONS: (in order reported)

a) HEU North Shore Community – Reported by Graham O’Neill

There is good news and bad news this month. The good news is that as of January 15, a tentative agreement has been reached in the Community Health Bargaining Association. The tentative agreement includes a 2% wage increase at ratification, a 1% wage increase April 1, 2013, protection of health and welfare benefits, improved grievance language, respect in the workplace, elimination of “double probation”, protection in retendering for casual workers, improved scheduling, and selection criteria improvement. The bad news is that in the Okanagan, the Crossroads Detox and Addiction Centre is being closed due to Interior Health Authority lack of funding. The services offered at the Centre were in high demand, so their closure is not a good thing.

b) BCGEU Local 1203 – Reported by Matt Damario

A number of members are still in bargaining: community social services, BCIT instructors and support staff, Life Labs employees, and health science professionals. Community Health has received a tentative deal that includes a 3% wage increase. The BCGEU will be gearing up for the provincial election in May with their political action campaign. The union has come out in support of Chief Theresa Spence and the Idle No More movement.

c) TSSU – Reported by Murray Martin

TSSU and SFU came to a new collective agreement that was ratified with a 90% vote. The previous contract expired in 2010 and the university bargained in bad faith until the union took strike action in late 2012. The contract has 4 year term with 0%, 0%, 2% and 2% wage increases. The lesson for TSSU, and labour, is either do not settle for 0% retroactive pay, or take job action when the contract expires. TSSU is giving employers incentive to bargain in bad faith by settling for 0% in the first years and bargaining with an expired contract. CUPE Local 3338 is still in strike action at SFU and the TSSU will be doing everything possible to help them achieve a fair collective agreement.

d) CUPE Local 391 (Vancouver Public Library) – Reported by Gary Jarvis

Local 391 concluded 2 days of bargaining January 15, 2013. They have 2 more days of bargaining scheduled for the following week. Brother Jarvis will update the Council on their progress at the February meeting. It was reported in December that the union was having some issues at Mount Pleasant Branch. After a review of the problems, management has decided to station one security guard during the day-time hours at that branch. The union had entered a grievance for their event services assistants (ESAs) for a claim of back pay. Their ESAs had been working 2 hour shifts which are contractually allowed, but the contract does not allow for 2 hour shifts on weekends, so the union won the pay for all the weekend shifts. The win meant a pay-out for some of the Local’s lowest paid staff. Brother Jarvis thanked the Labour Council for the scholarship to Winter School.

- e) CUPW – Reported by Louise F. Sloan
In late December 2012, CUPW urban operations workers ratified their new collective agreement by 57%. The collective agreement is not great and contains rollbacks but the majority of members felt it was better than the alternative of final offer selection arbitration. CUPW also ratified by almost 70%, a new collective agreement which improves the rights and working conditions of their rural and suburban workers. In spite of these new collective agreements, Canada Post is still committed to reducing their rights even more. CUPW is fighting back. Also, in these snowy and icy times, the union is asking everyone to clear their walks to protect the health and safety of their letter carriers, throw a little salt down – your postal-carriers will thank you.
- f) CUPE Local 1936 (Social Service Workers) – Reported by Michael Lanier
Community Social Services workers still have no bargaining dates and remain in strike position, although there is no current action. Activity will escalate in the next few weeks. This is the second protracted round of bargaining for this sector of about 14,000 workers in multiple unions since 2010. The last round went 22 months and they got 0 and 0. This round is now close to a year and no monetary offer is on the table, even with rotating strike actions across the province from October 16 through December 2012. All the union is asking for is a “cost of living plus 1%” increase; a 3% raise would see most workers in the sector get about \$12 to \$19 more per week before taxes, after 2 years of moving backwards in 2010 and 2011 and nearly 10 years of cuts, a 3% raise will still not bring starting wages back up to the \$16.83 per hour workers fought for back in 1999 with eleven weeks of strike action. The last pay increase was 2%, April 1, 2009 and this did not cover the increases to the cost of living. Right now the starting wage is \$15.54 and it takes 3 or more years to reach a top wage rate of \$18.27. Other main areas to be addressed are restoration of sick leave to 100% pay for sick time, portability and priority hiring for experienced workers, benefit coverage while on WCB injury compensation, and improvements for reimbursable expenses.
- g) CUPE Local 389 – Reported by Kathy McMahon
Written report submitted but not presented at meeting.
Local 389 has set dates of January 22, 23, and 24 for bargaining with North Shore Winter Club: February 13 with the District of North Vancouver; and February 14 with North Shore Neighbourhood House. The union’s primary focus for the new year is political action and doing all that is necessary to ensure that the NDP candidates in Local 389’s area get the support needed for a successful May election. Their committee donated funds prior to Christmas to 2 candidates and met with them to discuss how they can assist in getting out the vote. They are gathering lists of volunteers, including a mass mail out to all of Local 389’s retirees for support. The union will be meeting shortly with coalition partners on the North Shore to discuss their next steps and will be working with CUPE BC’s Political Action Zone Coordinators. They will also be holding worksite meetings to get the vote out.

The following verbal reports were presented but not submitted for the minutes:

- a) TWU Local 50 – Reported by Sheila Gorman
- b) HEU PHSA – Reported by Peter Marcus
- c) CUPE Local 15 – Reported by Paul Faoro

- d) CUPE Local 1004 – Reported by Mike McGahey
- e) CAW Local 2002 – Reported by Tim Cheung
- f) COPE Local 378 – Reported by Georgi Bates

MSC to adopt the reports of unions.

11. REPORT OF COMMITTEES: (in order reported)

- a) Women's – Reported by Ingrid Kolsteren
IWD posters are available. Delegates were encouraged to take posters back to their locals. The event is Friday, March 8 at the Fraserview Hall. Speakers are Marion Pollack, past vice president to the labour council and feminist blogger Jarrah Hodge. Music by the No Shit Shirleys an incredible singing group. Tickets are available now, \$40 / \$30 low waged. The committee's next meeting will be Monday, January 21 at the VDLC office. Anyone able to help out at the IWD Dinner please let Ingrid know. The next Women Transforming Cities Café is Wednesday, January 18, it will be focusing on public transportation and how it is serving or not serving women and girls. The Women's Committee will be holding a café for Women Transforming Cities in April.
- b) Strike Solidarity – Reported by Stephen Von Sychowski
The committee met and discussed the possibility of forming a sub-committee that would focus on more diverse, artistic actions to demonstrate their solidarity. If that is something delegates are interested in please contact Stephen. There are no current job actions on the agenda. The active disputes are primarily rotating job action making it difficult to coordinate support around. If anyone knows of job actions that are coming up please contact the VDLC and the committee can try to organize support.
- c) Education – Reported by Joey Hartman
The committee will be continuing the labour law education program in the spring. Details are yet to be worked out. Long-time labour lawyer Leo McGrady started the initiative to provide education on labour law issues for workers.

The pizza educational that usually proceeds the regular meetings of council will proceed as usual come February. Watch your email for topics.

Joey will be co-instructing a course at the CLC Harrison Winter School the first week of February on public speaking and rules of order; this is just one more way of broadening the labour council's scope.

- d) Young Workers' – Reported by Bonnie Hammond
The committee met January 14 where they opened elections for committee co-chairs. The elections will be held in February. The December craft fair raised just over \$500 for the committee. Calendars are still available, so if delegates' locals have not yet ordered their calendars please encourage them to do so. The committee is looking forward to the World Festival of Youth and Students this December in Ecuador and intend to coordinate with the BC Fed Young Workers' Committee and a few other local organizations. The first planning committee meeting is Wednesday, January 16.

MSC to adopt the reports of committees.

OTHER REPORTS:

COPE – Reported by Matt Damario

The labour committee had their first meeting. It was a brainstorming session around connecting with different locals and consulting with unions about where they'd like to see COPE develop their policies around labour issues. February 16, 11 am to 6 pm at the Vancouver Public Library Central Branch they will holding workshops on different issues to help develop policy for the upcoming election.

12. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NIL

13. NEW BUSINESS: NIL

14. NOTICE OF MOTION: NIL

15. GOOD AND WELFARE:

- Saturday, January 19 a member of Greece's progressive political party will be making a presentation at the MLC
- Miko Peled will be speaking on "Equality for Jews and Palestinians" on February 7 at the Vancouver Public Library, the event is sponsored by the VDLC – see enclosed flyer
- Young Workers have made a tradition of post-meeting socials at the WISE Hall and invite everyone to join them – the unionized staff of the WISE Hall are in negotiations and an issue for them is lack of business, so, as an act of solidarity, the young workers and friends have started frequenting the locale to do their part.
- Everyone asked to check out www.coopradio.org to hear some of Co-op Radio's programming and some of their archived programs

16. MEETING ADJOURNED: *MSC to adjourn at 9:08 pm.*

17. NEXT MEETING: [TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2013](#), 7:30 pm, Maritime Labour Centre.