



VANCOUVER and DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL



REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2013

- 1. LOCATION:** Maritime Labour Centre, 1880 Triumph Street, Vancouver, BC
- 2. CHAIRPERSON:** Stephen Von Sychowski, 2nd Vice President
- 3. ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:**
Amend January 15, 2013 minutes under, Credentials to read "Air Transat Component"

MSC that the minutes of the January 15, 2013 meeting be adopted as amended.

MSC that the regular order of business be suspended immediately following the President's Report in order to conduct the 2nd call for nominations and elections to the VDLC Executive Council.

4. CREDENTIALS:

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

ATU Local 1724

Bob Chitrenky

BC FORUM

Sandy Bauer

CEP Local 2025

Abudi Awaysheh

CUPE Local 389

Joyce Griffiths *

Lawrence Magtoto *

Kathy McMahon *

Cindy McQueen *

Carol Nordby *

Rod Smele *

Clay White *

Aaron Young (previously sworn in as Alternate)

Andrew Khan (A)

IBEW Local 213

Scott Ashton

Rav Ghuman

MSC to obligate/seat the delegate(s).

5. GUEST SPEAKER(S):

Matt Toner, NDP Candidate Vancouver False Creek

Matt thanked the Labour Council for the opportunity to speak and stated that with the Budget coming down and the closure of the Kitsilano Coast Guard Station, 2 words come to mind: decency and complacency. He's been asked why he's running for the NDP, being a business owner, having a background in economics, and having served in the military. He found it disappointing that people would think that because of his background he couldn't have a social conscience. His business takes great care to take on a project every year to give back; they've worked on projects for kids in Afghanistan, for disadvantaged kids in the Maritimes, and are working on something now with the United Nations. He believes that we come from a country built on a foundation of decency and that over the past few years that has been eroded. He feels that we are about to see that change here in BC and is excited to be a part of that change. There are those voters that despite the Liberal's record will never vote NDP. It is because of those voters that NDP supporters have to get out there, support their NDP candidates and mobilize the NDP vote. Although the NDP may be ahead in the polls, we can't afford to be complacent. We may be ahead, but we can only win if we get everyone out to vote.

6. PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Joey Hartman reported on VDLC activities since the January 15, 2013 meeting.

Job Action and Bargaining Support

- Universities and Colleges
 - CUPE 4627 at VCC – continued rotating job action
 - TSSU and CUPE 3338 at SFU - settled
 - BCGEU and BCIT Faculty & Staff Association at BCIT – tentative agreement
- BCGEU, HEU, CUPE, UFCW et al
 - Community Health - settled
 - Community Social Services - engaged in rotating strike action for 2 weeks involving 3,900 members, which led to employer requesting a return to the bargaining table
- BCGEU and LifeLabs – settled after 2 days of rotating job action
- BCGEU and BC Place – suspended job action to recognize good faith progress at the table
- BCGEU and SFU Child Care Society – commenced job action February 12
- COPE 378 and Capilano University – settled
- HSA and HEABC – Paramedical Professionals – settled
- UNITE HERE Local 40 – ongoing efforts to reach a settlement with the Sheraton in Richmond

Queen Alexandra School

Jim Stanford (CAW senior economist) is confirmed as the keynote speaker for the VDLC annual fundraiser to be held at the Maritime Labour Centre on Friday, April 26, 2013. Posters are available.

CLC Labour Council Task Force

The VDLC participated in a meeting January 29 with the CLC Task Force on how to make labour councils more effective. The task force, chaired by CUPE National President Paul Moist, is visiting a number of places across Canada to meet with affiliate leaders and labour council activists.

There will be a follow-up survey and labour councils across BC have decided to prepare a joint submission, which Sister Hartman has agreed to coordinate and draft.

CLC Harrison Winter School

The VDLC had good participation at Harrison this year. Gary Jarvis, VDLC Executive member from CUPE Local 391, attended Labour Council Leadership 1, Stephen Von Sychowski participated in the COPE 378 Strategy Retreat during one week and co-facilitated Young Workers another; and Joey Hartman attended for two weeks, facilitating Parliamentary Procedure and Public Speaking in week 4 and participating in Labour Council Leadership in week 5.

The Labour Council Leadership program focused on political updates and action with an emphasis on the BC provincial election. The status of Bill C-377 (changes to federal tax laws to require all labour organizations to publicly disclose all financial matters) and the potential for this legislation to be rejected by the Senate was covered, as well as the upcoming private members bill to reverse the Rand Formula in Canada.

April 28 Day of Mourning for Workers Killed or Injured on the Job

Plans are underway for the annual April 28 ceremony to be held at Garry Point in Steveston. The ceremony will start around 10:45 am on Sunday April 28, 2013 at the fisherman's memorial.

May Day

May 1, 2013 lands on a Wednesday. We need a small committee to organize VDLC activities.

Ken Davidson

Long-time CUPE and VDLC leader and activist Ken Davidson died on February 14, 2013. Ken had made the decision a few weeks earlier to discontinue dialysis and to die at home. At his request, a wake will be held to celebrate Ken's life. It will be held between 2:00 and 6:00 pm on Thursday, February 21st at the PNE. His passing is a great loss.

7. NOMINATIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD:

The following nominations were accepted at the January 15, 2013 regular meeting of council:

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

Treasurer	Paul Sihota	IAFF Local 18
Members at Large (12 positions)	Agnes Jackman	HSA
	Sylvia Metzner	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

2nd call for nominations to the VDLC Executive called, CLC Representative Ron Stipp presiding. The following were nominated for Executive Member-at-large:

Executive Position	Nominee Name	Union Represented
Members at Large (12 positions)	Rob Ashton	ILWU Local 500
	Mike Clarke	BCGEU LOCAL 303
	George Christou	UFCW Local 1518
	Brenda Coombes	CUPE Local 15

Nominations were immediately followed by elections. The following delegates were elected as VDLC Executive: (*officers elected by acclamation – ballots cast for member-at-large positions*)

Executive Position	Nominee Name	Union Represented
President	Joey Hartman	CEP Local 468
1st Vice President	Terry Engler	ILWU Local 400
2nd Vice President	Stephen Von Sychowski	COPE Local 378
Recording Secretary	Georgi Bates	USWA Local 2009
Treasurer	Paul Sihota	IAFF Local 18
Members at Large (12 positions) (in alpha order)	Rob Ashton	ILWU Local 500
	Tim Cheung	CAW Local 2002
	George Christou	UFCW Local 1518
	Kassandra Cordero	UFCW Local 1518
	Matt Damario	BCGEU Local 1203
	Gary Jarvis	CUPE Local 391
	Agnes Jackman	HSA
	Sylvia Metzner	BCTF - VSTA

	Carol Nordby	CUPE Local 389
	Graham O'Neill	HEU – North Shore Community
	Fruma Sloan	CUPW
	Russ St. Eloi	UA Plumbers Local 170

The new Executive Council was sworn in by CLC Representative Ron Stipp. Thank you to all nominees.

8. EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS:

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

Subject: New Affiliate

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL accept the application to affiliate from CEP Local 2025, staff union for PSAC.

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

Subject: Donations and Spending Approvals

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

- CoDevelopment Canada membership renewal for 2013 at a cost of \$250.00
- BC NDP for 2013 campaign (in addition to book off costs) donation of \$300.00
- BC Coalition for People with Disabilities donation of \$100.00
- People's Voice May Day Greetings Ad at a cost of \$90.00

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

Subject: W2

BECAUSE W2 has lost their lease in the former Woodward's building due to an inability to pay strata fees owed to the City of Vancouver of \$90,000; and

BECAUSE a coalition called W2Belongs2Me is working to develop a viable business plan to save this important community space; and

BECAUSE the City of Vancouver is receptive to seeking a solution and has extended their deadline for business proposals to March 1,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL encourage the City of Vancouver to meet with W2Belongs2Me and to give serious consideration to their business plan to maintain a vibrant community space in the former Woodward's building.

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

Subject: VDLC Support for the Provincial Election

BECAUSE the BC NDP is the party that best reflects the values and interests of workers; and

BECAUSE the VDLC budget for 2013 included \$4,000.00 to assist with the pre-campaign period prior to the May 14 provincial election; and

BECAUSE Craig Keating, who was endorsed by the VDLC in each of his elections over the past 12 years as a council member for the City of North Vancouver, is now the NDP candidate for the riding of North Vancouver-Lonsdale; and

BECAUSE this riding is considered to be one that could be successfully won from the Liberals,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL book-off a VDLC activist to assist in the pre-election period to elect Craig Keating, NDP candidate for the provincial riding of North Vancouver-Lonsdale, at a cost of up to \$4,000.00.

9. REPORT OF UNIONS: *(in order reported)*

- a) CUPE Local 391 – Reported by Gary Jarvis
Bargaining negotiations with Vancouver Public Library are complete. The membership will vote on March 3. The bargaining committee is recommending a ‘Yes’ vote.
- b) HEU North Shore Community Local – Reported by Graham O’Neill
The Community Health collective agreement was ratified by 86%. This includes pay increases of 3% by April 2013, however, there is a reduction of in-lieu pay for casuals. There is also language improvement in many areas. In Facilities, there is a backlog of medical/patient reports in the VCH totalling 16,500; HEU contends this is due to out-sourcing of medical transcriptionists and the corresponding lay-offs of HEU members.
- c) CUPE Local 1936 – Reported by Michael Lanier
Community Social Services Sector is back at the bargaining table. The employer is pushing for an agreement, similar but inferior to the Community Health deal. Any strike actions are on hold for the moment as long as bargaining moves forward. The local is still holding out for “cost of living” plus. The union is in no rush for a deal, unless it gives real improvements for their low wage sector. They will be accepting no concessions as they have given over and over for the past 10 years.
- e) CUPE Local 4078 – Reported by Michael Reed
Last spring, less than 9 months after ratifying a 5 year collective agreement, Local 4078 members voted to lend their annual cost-of-living increases to the employer (Air Transat) for 3 years, to be paid back at the end of December 2015. In the last month, the union was asked to cut an additional \$10 to 12 million per year from the collective agreement to fund an acquisition of new, smaller aircraft or face the loss of up to 1000 members across the country during the next 4 years. The employer is pleading unfair price wars from foreign-supported carriers and is taking full advantage of this to scare the members. A country wide vote of the members of the 3 locals will likely be held in March asking them to choose between quality of life and job protection. Along with this, the local is entering election-mode with Sisters Paterson and Roberts seeking the President and Vice President posts, respectively.
- f) CUPW – Reported by Fruma Sloan
After the ratification of 2 CUPW collective agreements, covering both the urban and rural bargaining units, Canada Post has continued to close public retail post offices; they are

threatening to close the Ladner Post office, which makes them money and are threatening to close others. This is part of a concerted federal government attack on Canadians' universal public postal service; Stephen Harper wants to make it less universal and less public. Canada Post is talking about closing down at least one of the public post offices in downtown Vancouver. The post office that generates the most money in Canada is at 349 West Georgia. The union will keep you posted.

g) BC Teachers' VSTA – Reported by Sylvia Metzner

The BCTF and BCPSEA have begun provincial negotiations as of February 4 after both sides ratified a new framework for bargaining. The framework addresses developing a common data base for costing of proposals, a re-designation of the split of provincial and local issues and an agreed-upon facilitator. At the local level they have initiated bargaining in Vancouver. The employer has shown a willingness to meet and the union is encouraged to have more substantive issues to bargain at the local level.

h) UA Plumbers Local 170 – Reported by Tom McKinley

Bill C377 (change to Canadian Revenue Agency re: public reporting of union finances) passed the House of Commons December 12, 2012 and had its first reading in the Senate a few days later; its second reading was held Feb 6, 2013 and now seems to be referred to the Senate Finance Committee. For benefits plan purposes, some comfort can be taken in the amendments made since the Bill was introduced. In particular, 149-6 B specifies the Bill doesn't apply to health and welfare trusts, pension plans, and supplementary unemployment plans.

i) IUOE Local 115 – Reported by Frank Carr

The Human Rights case for 40 South American workers hired to tunnel the Canada Line rapid transit received a payment of \$40,000.00. The payments were presented to them in their home country of Costa Rica by Joe Barrett and Labourers union representatives; to put it into perspective the cost of a nice house is \$15,000.00. The company paid Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW) only \$3.65 per hour when deductions were considered. Other workers were paid much more and the employer tried to argue that wages based on the economy in the country of origin could import into Canadian labour relations.

Also in the courts is the HD mining challenge being advanced by IUOE, the Labourers, and the Building Trades. They assert that 201 TFW permits issued by the Conservative government should never have been issued. The TFW program under the federal government is a broken system; it presumes that jobs must first go to available, qualified Canadians, but they don't monitor or enforce this. As a result, the TFW program is easily abused and the workers subjected to paid slavery. As a result of the Unions applications opposing the granting of the work permits and the long and onerous legal challenges the courts have ordered a Judicial Review of the TFW Program, which is a first.

Finally, 38 workers at the Fraser River Soil and Fibre Company in Richmond recently organized with the IUOE Local 115 and will be negotiating their first collective agreement.

MSC to adopt the reports of unions.

10. REPORT OF COMMITTEES: *(in order reported)*

- a) Women's – Reported by Agnes Jackman
March 8, International Women's Day Dinner at the Fraserview Hall, tickets are selling fast. The next committee meeting will be a potluck on March 26 at Ingrid Kolsteren's home: contact the VDLC for her address. The committee is hosting a Women Transforming Cities Café in April at the Britannia Community Services Centre it will focus on women in labour.
- b) Young Workers' – Reported by George Christou
The committee had a speaker, Sarah Bjorknas, at their Monday, February 18 meeting. She spoke about a war resister living in a Vancouver church for the past 3 years, with his wife and young child who are Canadian. He has tried to claim refugee status but to no avail. The committee was asked to bring their story to others and raise it with their MPs, anyone who might be in a position to help.

Congratulations were extended to Sister Erin Searle on her election with Brother Christou as Co-Chairs of the Young Workers' Committee and on behalf of the committee George thanked Sister Bonnie Hammond for her energy and work as Co-Chair over the past year.

MSC to adopt the reports of committees.

OTHER REPORTS:

- a) CLC – Reported by Ron Stipp
Bill 377 is still a priority for the CLC. The Bill is currently at Senate. The CLC will be asking people to contact the 5 BC Senators and urge them to reject this Bill. It will be at least the fall before the Bill goes back to the House of Commons. Bill 377 is the first part of what this government is trying to do to the Canadian people. Legislation is being drafted regarding eliminating the Rand formula. This is the line in the sand – if they introduce this legislation labour will mobilize en masse at every level.

In retirement security, an agreement has been reached with 8 of 10 provinces to improve the CPP. Provinces are considering doing this without the federal government to pass this - if 7 provinces are in favour (8 are) then it will go through.

The federal budget is coming down, it should be within the next couple of weeks, the CLC will be working with the labour councils and affiliates on budget watch.

- b) EI Board of Review – Reported by Russ St. Eloi
The Board of Review was eliminated as a process for employees to appeal decisions on their EI. November 2012 was supposed to be the end of new appeals and complete all files by April 2013. Extensions have been granted for appeals to October 21, 2013 – they are clearing the backlog. The new process being introduced has still to have regulations introduced for it. They are hiring 30 to 40 people who will have to be experts in EI, WCB, and LTD to replace over 1000 specialized people.

- c) BC FORUM – Reported by Sandy Bauer
They have been following the BC Fed election program; see the issue of “The Advocate”, new issue coming soon.

MSC to adopt the reports of committees.

11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NIL

12. NEW BUSINESS:

MSC that the following emergency resolution submitted by Charles Boylan, ETEA Local 1 delegate be adopted:

Subject: BC Medical Plan Premiums

BECAUSE the cost of BC Medical Plan was increased 4% January 1, 2013 and the new budget submitted in the Legislature today will increase the cost another 4% January 1, 2014; and

BECAUSE the cost of the plan will then increase to \$69.25 for a single person per month and \$138.50 for families of three or more; and

BECAUSE only 25 to 30% of the population is covered by employee medical benefit plans and another 200,000 are subsidized, leaving over 3 million people to pay this increase for the medical plan in BC,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL condemn this increase to the BC Medical Plan and reiterates the call of the organized workers’ movement that the entire scheme of citizens having to pay a medical premium be eliminated as it is in most Canadian provincial jurisdictions; and further

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL urge the health care workers’ sector and all other workers to vigorously raise the issue during the upcoming provincial election.

13. NOTICE OF MOTION: NIL

14. GOOD AND WELFARE:

- 50/50 proceeds to benefit the Young Workers’ Committee fundraising to attend the World Festival of Youth and Students in Ecuador, December 2013.
- Brother Jarvis attended the Harrison Winter School on the VDLC scholarship and will submit a report next month
- Social Housing Coalition recently held a press conference at Carnegie. They have been holding Stands for housing every Saturday at noon at Hastings and Abbott. If anyone can go down with their union signs or banners, they really appreciate the support.
- Co-op Radio – 100.5 fm – Friday, 10:30 am to 12 noon, Sounds of Resistance is a political music show – tune in

- WISE Hall, pub at Victoria and Adanac, is a Steel Workers' cert and is struggling for business. A tradition is being made of frequenting the establishment after the Regular monthly meeting – everyone was invited to go
- World Peace Forum Teach-in is being planned “If Capitalism Doesn't Work, What Does?” they'll be meeting March 5 for anyone that wants to get involved.
- Sister Janet Routlege from PSAC BC is running for NDP MLA Burnaby North an event for her is being held Saturday, February 23 – Burnaby North is a target riding
- March 3 – BC Fed Young Workers' Conference being held in Nanaimo before the BC Fed regional conference – any affiliates with young worker members on the Island, contact Kassandra Cordero
- Stroller Brigade, Saturday, March 9 at Jericho Park and marching to Christy Clark's office to deliver messages, via post-it note, on the importance of child care and family services to the people of BC.
- The Reds will be showing Sunday, 7 pm at the Socialist Education Centre
- The VDLC is sponsoring “Calling Mr. Robeson” on February 23 and the Solidarity Notes will be performing a couple of songs before the show

15. MEETING ADJOURNED: *MSC to adjourn at 9:15 pm.*

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