



VANCOUVER and DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL



REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 2014

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

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

3. **ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:**

Amend February minutes under Reports of Unions to reflect that the HEU North Shore Community Local's report should read that the Local voted 64% against the proposed agreement, not in favour.

MSC that the minutes of the February 18, 2014 meeting be adopted as amended.

MSC to amend the January 21, 2014 minutes to correct an omission in the resolution dealing with the constitutional change. Please see enclosure outlining the omission.

4. **CREDENTIALS:**

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

BCTF – Burnaby Association

Toni Grewal
Leanne Sjodin

CUPE Local 407

Brent Boyd

CUPE Local 2396

Steven Beasley

CUPW

Rebekah Mahar

ILWU Local 500

Al Keely
Angela Talic

CUPE Local 15

Leanne Anderson Toderian *
Sally Bankiner *
Brenda Coombs *
Barbara Dickenson *
Donna Peterson *

Unifor Local 111

Ruth Armstrong

MSC to obligate/seat the delegate(s).

5. **GUEST SPEAKERS:**

a) Seth Klein, Director of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives BC

The CCPA has a long standing relationship with the labour movement. They started nationally over 30 years ago as a coming together of unions, progressive academics and community organizations. Nearly all labour council affiliates are members of the CCPA, but how many individuals are? As important as the income is from organizational members, the income from individual members is more significant; the CCPA is the only non-governmental think tank in Canada for whom that is true.

The CCPA's role is to prove the research that allows us to go out and say, with authority, that poverty, social cuts, homelessness, are not insurmountable problems like we are told and here are the facts and figures that prove it. They provide research and communication on social, economic and increasingly on environmental issues. The CCPA is an alliance builder: they helped end the 'war in the woods' between environmentalists and the unions effected; they act as the secretariat for the poverty reduction coalition; they are instrumental in establishing the living wage for families (both poverty reduction group and living wage coalition bring together social justice organizations, welfare organizations, and the labour movement); and the climate justice project which brings together academics, NGO's on climate change, anti-poverty groups, and trade unions.

Another key thing they do is train the next generation. Next Up youth leadership program is in its 7th year. Many of the alumni have gone on to the labour movement and other social justice organizations.

The CCPA is going through some challenges. For the first time they are shrinking. While support from individual members continues to go up, in the past year they've lost 3 institutional funders, and larger still a grant from SSHRCC (Social Science Humanities Research Council) has ended. Despite these financial hurdles, the CCPA's work is getting out there more than ever – last year 3,500,000 publications were downloaded from the CCPA website.

They continue their work on the climate justice project as well as working on seniors' inequality. They want to spend the next few years mapping out what truly progressive jobs agenda looks like – one that deals seriously with the climate imperative but is more hands on.

All donations made to the BC Solutions Fund benefit the BC CCPA office and delegates were encouraged to join as individual members if they weren't already a member, memberships are split between the BC and National office, but information is received from both. Delegates were asked to encourage their locals to become organizational members if they weren't already. Membership forms for both individuals and organizations were made available as were BC Solutions donation forms.

b) Derrick O'Keefe and Nadia Santoro – People's Social Forum

Sister Santoro is a member of UFCW Local 1518, co-chair of the BC Fed Young Workers' committee and an organizer of the People's Social Forum. Brother O'Keefe is a member of Unifor, a long-time activist, and acting chairperson of the BC expansion committee of the People's Social Forum. Going back to 2001, the first world social forum was held in Allegro, Brazil bringing some 100,000 participants from around the world for social justice. Out of the World Social Forums was a call to bring the Forum to regional and national levels. From August 21 to 24, Ottawa will host Canada's People's Social Forum. The organizers here have tapped into labour history, specifically the On-to-Ottawa Trek. They hope to organize an On-to-Ottawa caravan from BC across the country to Ottawa with events across the country giving the opportunity to raise awareness along the way about labour, indigenous, environmental rights, and all of these overlapping issues that are the foundation of the People's Social Forum. The Québec labour and social movements have a long history of sending large delegations to the World Social Forums. At the last Forum in

Tunisia in 2013, there were between 150 and 200 delegates from Québec. Québec delegates have been lobbying to hold a World Social Forum in Montreal, but with push for regional / national forums, Québec delegates proposed that they host a pan-Canadian social forum which resounded with organizations like the Council of Canadians. The Forum will be taking place approximately 1 year before a likely federal election. The goal is to bring together as many social and labour activists as they can before an important year in Canadian politics. Everyone is invited to participate and be a part of this important piece of our history. See enclosure.

6. PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Joey Hartman reported on VDLC activities since the February 18, 2014 meeting.

Political Action

Only three affiliates have appointed anyone for the VDLC's multi-union municipal candidate vetting committee. Sister Hartman will follow up with those that have not yet provided a committee member and set up the first meeting.

BC Federation of Labour Lobbying MLAs

Sister Hartman, as an Executive Council member of the BC Federation of Labour, travelled to Victoria March 2 to 5 to participate in meetings with Liberal, NDP and Green Party MLAs. The lobby meetings focused on three areas:

1. increasing minimum wage to \$13.00 with a committee to review and adjust annually;
2. improve trades apprentice and training opportunities and ratios to journey persons;
3. institute regulations similar to those in Manitoba to register and monitor the use of temporary foreign workers in the province, and lobby the federal government to eliminate the highly abused and exploitive "low skill" category.

Labour Law Classes and other VDLC Education

Privacy Rights in the Workplace class on March 22 is overfilled with the expectation of some cancellations. The next course we are promoting is on Pension and Benefit Law. It is scheduled for Tuesday, April 8 and is designed as an advanced course for union trustees, administrators, negotiators and others who are responsible for improving pension and benefits for union members.

In addition, a schedule of eleven law courses being offered for 2014 has been circulated to affiliates. Most are on Saturdays.

Day of Mourning – April 28

In recent years we have rotated the Day of Mourning for Workers Killed and Injured on the job between a VDLC and a New Westminster & District Labour Council jurisdiction. This year it will be held at noon at the New Westminster Quay on Monday, April 28. Extra effort will be made to contact unions who have offices in the area to encourage their participation.

Metro Vancouver Alliance

The founding assembly scheduled for Wednesday, March 19 has almost 600 people attending; including 32 VDLC delegates. They represent the 40 member organizations from labour, faith and community groups, along with politicians, leaders from each sector and other community leaders as interested observers.

The listening campaign led to a discernment meeting on March 3 where all of the issues that had been raised were distilled down to four broad issues to begin working on: transit, housing, ending poverty and isolation. The next stage will be to have research teams determine achievable and specific objectives to campaign around that will be supported by 100% of the member organizations.

The labour movement has fewer member organizations than faith and community, and it is hoped that the identification of issues combined with a successful founding assembly will attract additional unions as members.

QAS Fundraising Dinner April 11 with Kent Wong

Posters are in circulation for this dinner to support Queen Alexandra School.

May Day 2014

We also have a small planning committee to coordinate May Day, Thursday, May 1, 2014. We will gather at Clark Park and march northbound to Grandview Park where a short rally will be held. The BC Fed Young Workers (EARN) are planning an event to follow.

International Solidarity – Delegation to China

The BC Fed and VDLC delegation to China is now confirmed for June 18 to July 2, 2014. It will include meetings with trade union leaders and workers in Beijing, Shanghai, and Shandong Province, as well as some sightseeing and cultural activities.

The VDLC will not be responsible for any costs or wage loss for labour council participants. Tim Cheung and Joey Hartman will participate, along with several BC Fed officers and others for a total of 12 to 15.

7. CORRESPONDENCE:

Circulated at meeting.

8. EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS:

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

Subject: Spending Approvals

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

- Camp Jubilee “Send a Kid to Camp” – Donation of \$100.00
- Komagata Maru Incident 100th Anniversary – purchase up to 3 tickets at \$30.00 each for March 30 dinner at Bombay Banquet Hall in Surrey – offer to delegates interested – possible total cost of \$90.00
- Golden Tree Monument Project – Donation of \$100.00
- Medicare Defense – Donation of \$200.00

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

Subject: Minimum Wage Increase

BECAUSE the VDLC supports the Living Wage Campaign, which is currently calculated at \$19.62 for Metro Vancouver; and

BECAUSE minimum wage is currently \$10.25 with a lower rate for workers who serve alcohol; and

BECAUSE the BC Federation of Labour has called upon the Province of BC to increase the minimum wage to \$13.00 per hour, with a committee struck to review and determine appropriate increases each year as is common in other provinces; and

BECAUSE \$13.00 per hour would bring a full time worker just over the federal Low Income Cut Off (LICO), commonly referred to as the poverty line,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL endorse the BC Federation of Labour's call for a \$13.00 per hour minimum wage, combined with an annual review and adjustment, as a strategy towards achieving a living wage for all workers.

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

Subject: CLC Domestic Violence Survey

BECAUSE the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) in partnership with the University of Western Ontario's Centre for Research & Education on Violence against Women & Children (CREVAWC) has launched a nation-wide survey on the impact of domestic violence on workers and workplaces; and

BECAUSE this national survey will gather data about the prevalence and the impact of domestic violence in the workplace, and provide made-in-Canada research that will help unions, employers, advocates and governments develop good public policy and assist unions at the bargaining table; and

BECAUSE a similar survey in Australia produced laws giving over one million Australian workers domestic and family violence workplace benefits, including dedicated paid leave, protection from adverse action and flexible work arrangements; and

BECAUSE when workers experience domestic violence at home, the impacts are felt in the workplace. A recent study by Justice Canada estimates that employers lose \$77.9 million annually as a result of domestic violence; and

BECAUSE the anonymous survey, which takes 10 to 30 minutes to complete, is online until June 6, 2014 at www.fluidsurveys.com/s/DvatWork and all workers over the age of 15 are encouraged to complete the survey,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL encourage all affiliates and delegates to complete the Canadian Labour Congress survey on the impact of domestic violence on workers and workplaces, regardless of whether or not they believe they have been impacted personally, and to encourage others to participate.

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

Subject: Defense of Medicare and Health Accord Day

BECAUSE Dr. Brian Day, owner of Vancouver's for-profit Cambie Surgery Centre and the leading proponent of privatized health care, has launched a constitutional challenge to break Medicare via the courts and establish a US-style system in Canada; and

BECAUSE this challenge aims to break Medicare in Canada by striking down provincial health legislation that limits the for-profit delivery of medically necessary services, claiming that these rules violate the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; and
BECAUSE the BC Health Coalition and Canadian Doctors for Medicare are interveners in this case; and

BECAUSE this BC based case will almost certainly advance to the Supreme Court of Canada, thereby having national consequences; and

BECAUSE the Canadian Health Coalition has called for Health Accord Day on March 31 to bring attention to the day that the 2004 Health Accord expires and the fact that the federal government's plan to link health transfers to economic growth and cut health care spending by \$36 billion over 10 years will result in erosion of access to health care services and create a pretext for mass privatization; and

BECAUSE failing to renegotiate the Health Accord eliminates any leverage the federal government has to ensure provinces are complying with the Canada Health Act,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL support the BC and Canadian Health Coalition in their defense of Medicare by donating \$200.00 and encouraging other donations to the legal defense fund to counter the Dr. Day case, and to support March 31 Day of Action for a renewed Health Accord Canada to be negotiated between the federal, provincial and territorial governments, and to be based on predictable, adequate federal funding that includes a six percent escalator for a full ten years and a commitment to a federally-financed Canada Health Transfer equalization formula that ensures we continue to build a fair accountable and cost effective public health care system that provides high quality care for all Canadians.

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

a) ETEA Local 1 – Reported by Charles Boylan

Greetings to mark the 143rd Anniversary of the Paris Commune, established March 18, 1871; 143 years ago the first working class government was formed and ultimately gave rise to the Internationale with its immortal line, “The International working class shall be the human race”. Marx said the Communards stormed the heavens and they still inspire today in this era of neo-liberal attacks on workers’ rights and society in general.

Local 1 has met over 50% of membership supporting their bargaining committee and their serious fight to defend wages and benefits. The newly unionized schools are in negotiations. ETEA met with the Minister and Deputy Minister of Post-Secondary Education with FPSE about new visa requirements and accreditation of BC ESL and other private schools and privatization of ESL.

b) BCTF – VSTA – Reported by Sylvia Metzner

BCTF held their AGM, March 15 to 18. Jim Iker was re-elected to a second term as President. A strike vote was held earlier in the month and a substantial 89% of teachers across the province have voted to support their bargaining team. Bargaining will resume April 1.

- c) HEU – North Shore Community Local – Reported by Graham O’Neill
The Facilities Bargaining Association (FBA) contract covers 47,000 workers. They continue with priorities including fair and reasonable wage increases, benefit protection, job security, seniority rights, workload levels, contracting in, money and restoring frozen vacation entitlements. The employer was to respond this week to an FBA comprehensive package tabled Wednesday, March 12.

National Day of Action March 31st to fight what will grow to \$5 billion in cuts to Federal Health Care spending. Write emails to MPs and letters to newspaper editors.

- d) CUPE Local 454 – Reported by Roger Phillips
Reporting that Local 454 elected a new executive in February, electing Jennifer Clarke as their new president. Thank you to Darryl Robison for his 15 years of service to the local as their past president.

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

- a) COPE Local 378 – Reported by Stephen Von Sychowski
b) Teamsters Local 31 – Reported by Dave Lundy
c) CUPW – Reported by Fruma Sloan
d) Unifor Local 2002 – Reported by Tim Cheung

MSC to adopt the reports of unions.

10. REPORT OF COMMITTEES: (in order reported)

- a) Women’s – Reported by Fruma Sloan
IWD Dinner was a success with 405 tickets sold – the most ever. Thank you to the committee for their help to make the evening what it was. At the end of the evening all of the staff of the Fraserview Hall had their wages topped up by the committee to ensure that they all made a living wage for the event.
- b) Young Workers’ – Reported by Erin Searle
Elections were held at their last meeting for Chair and co-Chair of the committee, Erin Searle was re-elected as Chair and George Christou as co-Chair. Their last meeting was the first of their education series and it was on *How to be an effective chair* led by Joey Hartman. Next meeting is April 14 at 6 pm at the VDLC office; March 26 they will be presenting their World Festival of Youth and Students report back at the BC Fed office; and the committee’s next educational will be May 26.
- c) Solidarity in Action – Reported by Stephen Von Sychowski
March 13 marked 10 months of the lockout at Ikea Richmond; on March 12 a large solidarity picket was held there, bringing coffee, donuts, muffins to help boost their morale and let them know that they don’t stand alone. Despite many having to find other jobs, they are still out there on the picket line, it’s inspiring. Although many can’t imagine going back to work there when this is all over, they stay and fight for what is right and will decide later what they will do. Their rep Anita Dawson advised Stephen that the solidarity pickets go a long way to boost their spirits. An online action is being planned, the committee will keep everyone posted for that and more solidarity actions coming up. Anyone interested in getting involved with the committee can contact the VDLC office, office@vdlc.ca

MSC to adopt the reports of committees.

OTHER REPORTS:

a) COPE – Reported by Matt Damario

March 29 and 30, COPE is holding their Policy Conference. Policies adopted will become their election platform for the Vancouver municipal elections. Policy submissions can be sent in via the COPE website, www.cope.bc.ca

b) BC FORUM – Reported by Sandy Bauer

Delegates were invited to take copies of the latest issue of the Advocate back to their workplaces. BC FORUM's AGM is scheduled for June 11 at the BCGEU Building in Burnaby. The board will be developing resolutions on a number of critical issues including CPP, MSP premiums, income inequality, the Medicare court challenge, the treatment of veterans, and the cuts to Canada's postal service.

There has been a great deal of discussion with regards to FORUM's declining finances and membership. There has been a significant decrease in their "core" funding over time. They've had to go from one full-time and one part-time staff person to just one part-time.

BC FORUM provides an avenue to keep in touch with union members after they leave the work force; both to provide information about issues and campaigns, and as a source of activists. This is increasingly important as the aging workforce retires. BC FORUM provides retiring members the opportunity to remain active and involved. Retaining these skilled and experienced activists benefits the whole labour movement.

The most opportune time to sign-up members is as they retire from their jobs. UFCW and HSA sends their retirees a special BC FORUM application noting that the union will pay the first year's membership, which FORUM invoices them for. BCGEU and CUPE refund their first year membership fees in certain cases.

There are ongoing discussions on how to "capture" retiring members including quarterly meetings with a number of affiliates who have appointed representatives to liaise with BC FORUM. However, not all affiliates are participating.

Sister Bauer asks delegates to bring the discussion to their meetings and encourage their leadership to follow up. BC FORUM serves the needs of both retired and non-retired union members over the age of 50. Membership is \$20 for 1 year, or \$49 for 3 years.

c) CLC – Reported by Ron Stipp

CLC Convention will be held at the beginning of May in Ottawa. Together Fairness Works workshops (see attached), a number of affiliates are running their own. Municipal election work is ramping up. There are currently 18 political action endorsement committees set up with each labour council in the province. While there are 289 progressive candidates currently elected and every bi-election this past year was won by progressive candidates this past year, the goal is to have over 300 progressive candidates in office by next year. The CLC is offering candidate training June 21 and again in September, level 1 for first time candidates and level 2 for incumbents looking to refresh their skills.

11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NIL

12. NEW BUSINESS: NIL

13. NOTICE OF MOTION: NIL

14. GOOD AND WELFARE:

- 50/50 draw proceeds to benefit the Solidarity in Action Committee
- Everyone invited to join in some social solidarity at the WISE Hall after the meeting
- UK Retailer Primark has donated \$10 million to compensation package for families of workers killed and injured in Bangladesh factory collapse, although it's only 40% of what is needed it is a solid start and good for Primark for stepping up
- Pete Seeger sing-a-long, April 6 at Peretz Hall – flyers were available
- March 31 – healthcare rallies to restore the Federal / Provincial Accord

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

16. NEXT MEETING: [TUESDAY, APRIL 15, 2014](#), 7:30 pm,
Maritime Labour Centre, 1880 Triumph Street.

Pizza Educational
Tuesday, April 15, 2014, 6:00 pm

Green Jobs BC

Facilitated by Jonathan Kassian, Coordinator of Green Jobs BC.
Green Jobs BC is a collaboration between labour and environmental groups to advance initiatives that create both job and environmental benefits and build a constructive dialogue around a stronger, greener, and more sustainable economy.