



VANCOUVER and DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL



May 25, 2021

The Honourable Ahmed Hussen
Minister of Families, Children and Social Development – Ahmed.Hussen@parl.gc.ca

Granville Island Council
info@granvilleisland.com

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
Fax: 613-748-2098

Greetings,

I am writing today on behalf of the Vancouver and District Labour Council, representing approximately 60,000 unionized workers in the City of Vancouver and neighbouring municipalities.

We were deeply concerned to hear about the concessionary demands being made of Public Service Alliance of Canada Local 20378 members employed by CMHC Granville Island.

Over the course of the last 40 years, Local 20378 members have been key to the operation of Granville Island, helping it remain one of Metro Vancouver's most popular attractions for both local residents and tourists.

During that time, Granville Island employees have worked together through their union to ensure fair conditions of employment through their collective agreement. But now, during the uncertain and stressful times brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, management has moved to undermine those decades of negotiation and compromise with unfair concessionary demands.

We understand that the demands in question include reducing shift premiums by four hours per day for new hires. It is well known and understood that two-tier collective agreements, wherein new staff receive reduced pay or benefits compared with their senior counterparts, serve to weaken unions and cause division within the workforce. They can also lead to reduced employee retention, which negatively impacts the employer as well.

Furthermore, management is seeking to remove language ensuring that improvements to vacation and paid holiday leave for exempt personnel are also granted to unionized staff.

Pg. 2/...

Finally, management seeks to add language allowing for the addition of unlimited casual employees to be added to the workforce across the operation. The trend towards less and less secure forms of employment is profoundly harmful to the well-being of workers, who find themselves struggling to get by through a series of low-paying casual, part-time, or gig positions. It is unfortunate that Granville Island management would seek to join this disastrous trend rather than standing proudly as a provider of good, secure, family and community sustaining jobs.

What's worse, there is no economic justification for any of these proposals. Granville Island has been the recipient of federal emergency funding to the tune of \$16.7 million in 2020 and another proposed \$22 million in 2021. This has sheltered Granville Island from the devastating effects of COVID-19 that have been felt by some other attractions. Given this, and the apparent divisive nature of the concessionary demands, it appears that managements bargaining approach is aimed primarily at undermining the union and triggering the start of a race to the bottom in terms of wages and benefits.

We therefore call on Granville Island management to drop their anti-union concessionary demands and return to the table in good faith to negotiate a fair and reasonable collective agreement with Local 20378. We also express our solidarity with Local 20378 and stand ready to support them in regard to this matter however appropriate and encourage our affiliated unions to do the same.

Yours Truly,



Stephen von Sychowski
President, VDLC

cc: VDLC Executive Board
Jamey Mills, BC Regional Executive Vice-President, Public Service Alliance of Canada -
revp-bc@psac.com

svs/eb

move**p**