



**REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 2023**

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.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Calls to Action

Equity for Aboriginal People in the Legal System

51. We call upon the Government of Canada, as an obligation of its fiduciary responsibility, to develop a policy of transparency by publishing legal opinions it develops and upon which it acts or intends to act, in regard to the scope and extent of Aboriginal and Treaty rights.

1. LOCATION: Hybrid | Maritime Labour Centre and ZOOM Video Conference – 7:00PM

2. CHAIRPERSON: 1st Vice President Bal Sandhu

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

4. ADOPTION OF MEETING AGENDA

M/S/C that the agenda of the March 21, 2023 Regular meeting be adopted.

5. ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

M/S/C that the minutes of the February 21, 2023 Regular meeting be adopted.

6. REPORT ON NEW CREDENTIALS:

ACWU – IATSE Local B-778

Philip Dion

CUPW Vancouver Local 846

Raylene Marshall

Amanda Myers

7. OBLIGATION OF NEW DELEGATES

8. GUEST SPEAKERS:

Louella Vincent and April Duffield
Co-chairs of the New Westminster & District Labour
Council Indigenous Workers' Committee

**Presentation available upon request*

9. EDUCATIONAL: NIL

10. PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

President Stephen von Sychowski reported on activities since the February 2023 meeting.

Political Action

The Vancouver budget was adopted on February 28 with a 10.7% property tax increase. The adoption on that date came as a surprise to many, as a further day of public consultation was anticipated. I spoke at council regarding the budget, urging funding for equity priorities laid out in the Women Transforming Cities letter which we had signed onto, as well as for fire service expansion and living wage.

While this budget appears to avoid immediate deep cuts that would lead to layoffs and loss of services, it fails to fund all of the priorities we have supported. It does, thankfully include some new funding (4.19m) for the fire service. But it does not include funding to increase staffing in other areas, such as libraries.

Worse, mayor and council made a closed-door, consultation-free decision to walk away from the city's commitment to be a living wage employer. This is just a downright meanspirited way to save a few bucks. Only Councillors Boyle (OneCity), Carr (Green), and Fry (Green) have indicated their support for the living wage policy.

In response we issued a media advisory and wrote to mayor and council calling for reconsideration of this terrible decision. We have also encouraged members and supporters to write the mayor and council and to sign the OneCity petition. The issue received substantial media coverage, much of which included the labour council. We will continue to work with the Living Wage for Families campaign and other allies to demand a living wage for all workers.

Since our last meeting I have met with several of our local labour-friendly elected representatives, including a coffee meeting with Trustee Suzie Mah (COPE), and phone meetings with City of North Vancouver Mayor Linda Buchanan, and Councillor Angela Girard. I also met, alongside Janet Andrews from New Westminster & District Labour Council, with Port Coquitlam Mayor Brad West, who is also Chair of the Mayor's Council. Additionally, I have been in contact with Vancouver City Councillor Christine Boyle and have scheduled her as a guest speaker for our April meeting. I also attended a town hall with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, hosted by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 213 at the premises of the Electrical Joint Training Committee in Port Coquitlam.

In other political action news, I am happy to report that the work done a few weeks ago in opposition to the merger of the standing committees was a partial success. The VSB locals, VDLC, and DPAC came together to issue a letter, a media advisory, and to have people attend various meetings and reach out to trustees. It looked grim, with the Greens seeming to impact agreement with ABC on the issue. However, when the vote came down Janet Fraser moved to refer the issue back to staff rather than proceed with the merger. This was supported 5-4 (with the two Greens, Reddy (OneCity), Mah (COPE), and Richardson) voting in favour. Obviously, this is not as ideal as the merger being defeated altogether, but it is a win, particularly given the odds. This has many of those who were involved excited about the possibility of further coordinated action at VSB.

Finally, I have been meeting with representatives of New Westminster & District Labour Council, Sunshine Coast Labour Council, and Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1724 regarding the state of HandyDart service. This service is unfortunately contracted out by TransLink to a private, U.S.-based corporation. The current state of the service is poor, with many rides being double contracted out to taxi services, which are more costly and are not designed to provide the same level of service as HandyDart. Bus operators are facing high injury and burnout rates. It's long past time to bring HandyDart back in-house, much as has recently been done with many workers in healthcare and long-term care. The Council of Senior Citizens Organizations, BC Federation of Retired Union Members, and BC Disability Alliance have also now expressed interest in working with us on this issue. Stay tuned!

Labour Education

Since our February meeting I facilitated two further steward classes for CUPE Local 8911. It was once again great to work with a group of new, enthusiastic stewards and help them begin their journey as stewards.

We also hosted the Human Rights Bootcamp with Conni Kilfoil. While registration was lower than usual for this course, it was a huge success for those in attendance, which included local participants as well as some workers from Kamloops district. This was the final bootcamp for Conni, who is in the process of retiring, however we will continue to offer courses on Human Rights in the future with new facilitators.

Our WCB Level 1 course with Sarah O'Leary and Niki Schnurr was also a success, and we have two additional WCB courses on the horizon. These will be WCB Appeals, and WCB Update on Bill 41.

Please continue to promote the labour education program to your members.

International Women's Day

For International Women's Day we shared the Gender Justice Champion pledge campaign from the Canadian Labour Congress.

While we were not able to host the traditional dinner event this year, the response to that unfortunate news was strong. We received numerous emails from delegates and other members offering to join the Women's Committee and help make it happen next year.

It will be exciting to see what's next from this committee!

I would also like to thank outgoing Women's Committee chairperson, Caitlin Davidson-King. Caitlin did tremendous work leading the committee over the past several years, including those difficult early years of the COVID-19 pandemic. Regrettably, she has had to step down from this role due to changing life circumstances, and a demanding workload in her role as an organizer.

Thank you also to Chena Binns for stepping up over the past month and hosting a meeting of the committee recently.

May Day

We will be hosting a May Day rally at 5pm on May 1st at Vancouver City Hall. We'll be calling for unity in defense of living wages, renter rights, the city's commitments to equity, Reconciliation, climate action, progressive drug policy, and more.

Let's send a powerful message that we will not accept our coworkers, neighbours, and communities being left behind.

Labour Day

We have sent a call out for members of the Labour Day Planning Committee, and for contributions to support the event. We continue to anticipate this being a Metro-wide event co-hosted with NWDLC. The location has not yet been determined, but likely somewhere in Burnaby, with parking and near a SkyTrain station may be relatively central for people across the region.

Labour Appreciation Night

Planning has not yet begun, but it appears we are going to be on track for hosting an event in place of the Labour Appreciation Night late this year. Stay tuned for more info.

Just Transition Coalition

Thanks to significant financial support from Vancity, the Just Transition Coalition is continuing to move forward. I have been attending meetings and workshops related to this.

Events Attended / Dates of Note

February 22: Pink Shirt Day
February 22: Meeting re: Municipal & Housing Committee reactivation
February 22-24: Labour Education – Human Rights Bootcamp
February 23: Just Transition Coalition working group
February 23: Worker Education & Labour Learning Society directors meeting
February 24: Steward Level 1 with CUPE Local 8911
February 25: Young Workers Committee organizing workshop
February 27: Budget briefing with Councillor Christine Boyle
February 28: Spoke at Vancouver City Council re: budget
March 1: Free them Now conference in solidarity with Iran
March 1: City of Vancouver living wage meeting
March 1: Town Hall with Prime Minister Trudeau
March 3: Meeting with Mayor West
March 3: Meeting with New Westminster & District Labour Council Secretary-Treasurer
March 4: Steward Level 2 with CUPE Local 8911
March 6: Community Solidarity Metro Vancouver meeting
March 6: Political Action Committee
March 6: Meeting re: HandyDart
March 7: Labour Education – WCB Level 1
March 8: International Women's Day
March 8: Unite Here Local 40 rally
March 10: Meeting with Vancouver School Trustee Suzie Mah
March 13: May Day planning meeting

March 14: Anti-Racism Committee

March 15: Vancouver Economic Commission – Just Transition for Community and Workers

March 16: United Way BC Campaign Cabinet Labour Committee

March 16: Executive Board

March 21: Regular Meeting

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

11. TREASURER'S REPORT:

Treasurer Stefan Nielsen reported on financials since the February 2023 meeting.

M/S/C to adopt the Treasurer's Report.

12. CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS REPORT:

Ron Stipp, CLC Representative, presented the CLC report for February 2023.

The CLC Convention takes place May 8-12. If you're interested in going, credentials deadline is coming up quickly on April 6. It looks like a rather large convention in Montreal and there a lot of things to do there. For us, on the labour council level, the labour council forum is on the Sunday. If you're a delegate coming from a labour council, you are entitled to a vote with the labour councils in attendance. We'll also be choosing and electing a representative out of this region to be one of the vice presidents of the CLC for the convention.

Day of Mourning is coming up on April 28. CLC materials have been sent out to all of the labour councils and affiliates. Your event has gone out and it's very important that you make it out to this event.

Labour Day as you mentioned already in the planning stages. Rollout for this will come out after convention.

Just a little parliamentary update as of this afternoon. The Federal Budget is coming out next week on March 28. We're not expecting a ground breaking budget but one major thing that will be on there is the dental care program; the extension to seniors and persons with disabilities. In that we will hope to see that it will become more of a codified system, like Medicare and Pharmacare. It's part of the deal between the NDP and the Liberals.

Unfortunately, EI, which I've talked about for the last year, doesn't seem to be included in the budget. We're expecting improvements in EI. We have no indication when this will be happening even though the committee keeps meeting with us. We are still expecting Anti-scab legislation to be introduced late spring or early fall. It has moved up from next year to this year. We hope to have this in place by the end of this year; we not only have the NDP and the Liberals on side, but also the Bloc.

The newest stuff as of today is Bill C-228 on pension protection is in third reading in the Senate. The first part of that happened today, the second will happen tomorrow. That should

do it. It will then be returned to the House of Commons and then onto Royal Assent after that. This could be done as early as Friday which is a huge win for us and the labour community.

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: Spending Authorizations

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

- Sponsorship of Living in Community Provincial Sex Worker Conference at a cost of \$250

15. REPORT OF UNIONS: Nil

Submitted in writing in order to be included on meeting minutes.

M/S/C to adopt the report of unions.

16. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES: Nil

Submitted in writing in order to be included on meeting minutes.

OTHER REPORTS: Nil

M/S/ to adopt reports of committees.

17. REPORTS OF LABOUR COUNCIL APPOINTED REPRESENTATIVES: Nil

Submitted in writing in order to be included on meeting minutes.

M/S/C to adopt reports of labour council appointed representatives.

18. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Nil

19. ELECTION AND INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS:

20. NEW BUSINESS: Nil

21. NOTICE OF MOTION: Nil

22. GOOD AND WELFARE:

Russ St. Eloi – UA Local 170

I've talked about this before, and I'll continue to talk about it until something is done about it. Pay Equity. No one seems to want to do anything about this. The NDP government has passed some legislation recently, but they haven't included a lot. I'm not happy about us as a labour movement either in this respect. Somewhere along the line we have to get equal pay for our sisters of work of equal value.

Stephen von Sychowski – on behalf of the Young Workers' Committee

The workshop on Organizing that was held by the Young Workers' Committee went very well. The room was full of a good mix of union workers and non-union workers who wanted to learn more about organizing. Thank you to the committee and the BCFED Organizing Institute for facilitating. Just another note that the guest speakers at our next meeting on April 18 will be Councillor Christine Boyle and School Trustee Jennifer Reddy of OneCity.

23. MEETING ADJOURNED: *M/S/C to adjourn at 8:24pm*

24. NEXT MEETING:

TUESDAY APRIL 18, 2023 at 7:00 pm

Hybrid meeting will be at the Maritime Labour Centre, 111 Victoria Drive, Vancouver and via Zoom.

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