

MINUTES FROM GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING



Telephone Town Hall – November 23, 2017 @ 7 p.m.

1. **Meeting called to order** at 7:03 pm by Suzanne Hodge.
2. **Roll Call of officers:**
Suzanne Hodge, **President**; Dan Goodman, **Secretary-Treasurer**; Brian Taylor **VP #1**; Kathleen Allen **VP #2**; Susan Espin **VP #3**; Johnny Khakh **VP #5**, David Mowatt **VP #8**; David Haere **VP #10**, Charles Pratt **VP #14**.
3. **Adoption of Agenda**
m / s / c to adopt the agenda
4. **Adoption of September 11, 2017 Minutes** as posted on UFCW 247 website (November 13)
m / s / c to adopt the minutes
5. **Business Arising from Previous Membership Meeting**
None
6. **President's Report**
 - We have some staffing changes. We've signed a contract with Andy Neufeld to provide communication services for the Local. On Vancouver Island, Staff Representative Nora Butz retired at the end of May, and Steve McAusland replaced Nora as Staff Representative, which left a vacancy for the Relief Representative and Organizer. We have hired long time Executive Board member Johnny Khakh to fill that position effective December 3rd.
 - For Sobeys', as reported at the last membership meeting in September, Sobeys' served the Union notice on June 12 under LOU #4 in the collective agreement. Sobeys' notice to us was to 20 stores that the Company wanted to place under the Joint Labour Management Review process that number was later reduced to 19 with the closure of the Davie Street store. After multiple letters were exchanged over the summer between Local 247 and Sobeys', a grievance was filed by the Company and the Labour Board application challenging our refusal to meet on all 19 stores at once. On August 18th, Sobeys' filed an Expedited Arbitration Application to have the case heard. Under the Expedited Arbitration Process of the Labour Board, the hearing or arbitration must commence within 30 days of the application, in this case, made by Sobeys' on August 18th. There was no way for the Union to avoid this, which meant the process would have to begin by September 18th. There was considerable back and forth between the lawyers of Local 247 and Sobeys' regarding this.
The company's application to the labour board was subsequently dismissed by the labour board in September and on October 5th, the arbitration case was heard regarding the grievance the company filed on Letter of understanding #4.
The hearing was heard in front of arbitrator John McConchie and took one day. It was mainly a legal argument regarding the interpretation of the language. Dan Goodman and I, and Staff Representative Cathy Shannon attended along with one of our lawyers, Patricia Deol from Koskie Glavin Law. We expect a decision sometime this month, and it is an important one.
Is it appropriate for the Company to be able to deal with 19 stores at once under this Letter of Understanding. In addition if that were the case, there would be nothing to stop the company from continuing to serve notice under LOU#4, the joint labour management review process, on the remainder of the stores. The key issue is whether or not the union is obligated to meet

and agree to lesser terms and conditions in 19 stores at once. The union argued that the employer was able to serve notice to bargain as of September 30th and that was the appropriate method for the company to deal with their issues. Of course right at the end of the arbitration hearing, Sobeys did in fact tell us that they intended to serve notice to bargain and did so on October 6th.

A number of Safeway stores have closed temporarily for development and replacement. Namely, Arbutus formerly store # 127, Davie Street formerly store # 90 and most recently Austin Road in Coquitlam, formerly store #76. This has had an additional impact on the stores as members are moved to accommodate the closures and this issue will be a key issue in bargaining. In the case of the Davie Street Store, Sobeys would not allow any members there to bump into the next closest store which is Robson Street. We grieved that as did Local 1518. The filed for an expedited arbitration and the decision in the form of a consent order came out this Monday in favor of the union and that included a directive to re do the bumping for the Davie Street store. Local 247 will be taking the position that this should also apply to the Local 247 members and Bruce and Cathy will be following up on this.

Since the October 6th notice to commence bargaining was served by Sobeys' we held a 2 day proposals conference for Safeway/Sobeys earlier this week, on November 20th and 21st.

m / s / c to adopt the President's report as read

1 question was taken from member on the line while waiting for the adoption of the President's report.

7. **Secretary-Treasurer's Report & Bargaining Report**

- We recently had a number of arbitrations with the Local that were either resolved or progressed to hearing. Elisca Long who works in our Kelowna office and BC Tree Fruit agreed to a settlement that saw a terminated employee return to work with full seniority and benefits restored as well as compensation for the time the member was off. We have also seen a resolve to a group grievance regarding a number of members terminated at a Western Grocers distribution center. We were days away from hearing and our council and the Company council reached a confidential settlement. There is also another ongoing Western Grocers arbitration for a long term member's unjust discipline. It is just scheduled to continue in the new year.
- We were recently informed that Local 1518 were successful in an arbitration regarding vacation pay for Grid B members at Safeway. We had filed a similar grievance and we'll be having discussions with the Employer to seek a similar resolve. A grievance centered on the percentage of pay members would receive once the language and letter of understanding #21 was implemented. We were informed just two days ago that Sobeys' has applied for leave and reconsideration of the award on the basis that they feel they did not receive fair hearing. We'll have to wait and see how that progresses.
- As Suzanne noted, we held our Safeway proposals conference this past Monday and Tuesday in Burnaby. I think it went quite well and Cathy Shannon and the support staff did a great job getting it ready in condensed period of time. We had just over 30 members attend. Presentations were given by Tony Glavin on the final offer selection process and by Stephanie Griffith from BG Administrators who spoke at length on the pension plan. There are new members who hadn't attended a proposal conference before and we had some really good discussion on how the Company has been running things since they made the purchase and how the process will be a little different from previous negotiations due to the final offer selection process. Our next step is to get more input from the staff and chose a negotiations committee.

m / s / c to adopt the Secretary-Treasurer's report as read

8. **Bargaining Report**

- Vantage Foods has changed their name to Five Corners Meat Company. They changed it on October 1st. They won a bid that called for proposal and they won the bid over Vantage. The Vantage Foods contract stays in force until we negotiate a new collective agreement with Five Corners Meat. Dates have been proposed with the Company, and we're waiting for confirmation. They are looking at some expansion of products, which would mean additional hours, additional employees and additions hours for current employees. The Union will form a committee soon and get our proposals together.
- Versacold Corpak negotiations were delayed twice as the Company let go of their team on two separate occasions. So they have a brand new team. We commence negotiations on November 7 to the 9th with a completely new Company Committee. It was almost starting over again with a full Company Committee who are new to the negotiations. Future dates are scheduled, we will be meeting in the new year.

9. **Education & Training Report**

- The New Westminster Training Centre courses being offered will be wrapping up the second week of December. We are currently planning the winter course calendar, which is scheduled to start January 22, 2018. All new courses will be posted on our website near the end of December.
- New course brochures will be mailed to our Shop Stewards, and we ask that you continue helping us spread the word about the free courses available to members.
- If commuting to Training Centre in New Westminster is not an option for you, UFCW Canada offers free online courses through Web Campus, visit ufcw.ca/web-campus.
- We are currently planning a few new courses in January for our Shop Stewards. If any of your contact info has changed, please let us know. The New Westminster Training Centre will be hosting a 3-day introduction to Stewardship course the third week of January. 18 active members have been invited to this session. We plan to offer the same course in Kelowna.
- This was the third year we offered ten \$1,500 scholarships to full-time studies and an additional eight \$750 educational grants for members who pursue part-time studies. We received more than 55 completed applications; 5 of those were education grants, so the undistributed funds for the grants were rolled into an additional scholarship. So in total, 11 scholarships and 5 education grants were awarded for a total of \$20,250.

10. **New Business**

- No new business.
- 1 question taken from a member on the line.

11. **Member Draw**

The draw was conducted electronically.
3 winners were picked; each receiving a \$50 gift card.

12. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:41 pm