

MINUTES FROM GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING



Telephone Town Hall – November 21, 2019 @ 7 p.m.

1. **Meeting called to order** at 7:01 pm by Dan Goodman.
2. **Roll Call of officers:**
Suzanne Hodge, **President**; Dan Goodman, **Secretary-Treasurer**; Brian Taylor, **VP #1**; Susan Espin, **VP #3**; Sandra Geldart **VP #7**; David Mowatt **VP #8**; Gorden McDonald **VP #9**; David Haere, **VP #10**; Doug Insley, **VP #11**; Dale Juvelin, **VP #13**; Charles Pratt **VP #14**.
3. **Adoption of Agenda**
m / s / c to adopt the agenda
4. **Adoption of August 20, 2019 Minutes** as posted on UFCW 247 website
m / s / c to adopt the minutes
5. **Business Arising from Previous Membership Meeting**
None
6. **President's Report**
 - Brian Taylor is now the Recorder for the Executive Board, which leaves a vacancy for his former position, VP 1. The Board will appoint a replacement at the first quarter meeting in 2020.
 - The Executive Board has approved all the meeting and telephone town hall dates for 2020. The Telephone Town Hall dates will be posted on the website and in stores/units soon.
 - The CLC Convention is being held from May 4 to 8 in Vancouver. Current CLC President is not seeking re-election. UFCW Local 832 Secretary-Treasurer, Beatrice Bruske will be running for election as President, and UFCW will be support her election. Beatrice also has the support of many other affiliates. We'll be sending delegates to this convention.
 - Total membership count for January 2017 was 13,657 members; in January 2018 it was 15,214; and January 2019 it was 14,927. As of this September, we are at 14,559. Safeway membership in January 2017 was 1,808; January 2018 was 1,613; and January 2019 was 1,499. The recent store closures and conversions have had an effect on the overall Safeway/Sobeys membership.
 - Since 208, five stores permanently closed and 13 more in town and our of town stores closed to be converted to FreshCo. Of that group, two are open as Chalo, 7 are open as FreshCo. Out of town, we have 4 more store converting to FreshCo, which have not opened yet. In addition, there's been 4 stores closed for re-development, but are slated to re-open. Most recent to re-open is Safeway on Austin Road in Coquitlam.
 - We are unable to report on current FreshCo employees as we have yet to receive dues as we suspended their dues until a collective agreement was settled. They have recently started paying. We are averaging between 5 to 15 employees per store, so we anticipate membership to increase by about 75 members for an approximate total of 1,573 Safeway/Sobeys members this year.
 - The more conversions, the more we see our Safeway membership reduced. We are keeping an eye on this, and when the remaining 3 replacement stores re-open as full Safeway stores, we should re-store some of the lost membership, but likely below the 2017 level.
 - Organizing has been a high priority with the National & International office and Local Unions. We've gone through various incarnations over the years regarding organizing incentives. Most

recently, since 2012, the percentage of post per capita income (currently 20%) is to be spent on organizing each year by local.

- The National Office decided to name all Canadian Presidents to an organizing committee and we'll be meeting in Toronto at the end of January to discuss organizing with a view to developing new methods.
- A number of years ago we began using the Hustle app, which allows organizers to text large groups of potential members, and has the ability to use location-based texts, also known as geofencing. During the Tilray Campaign, this technology was used. I'll report to you the outcome of the January committee meeting.

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

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

- Long time Local 401 President Doug O'Halloran passed away on October 14th. In mid-August he stepped down as President of Local 401, and Tom Hesse, Doug's long time Executive Assistant stepped in as President. Doug had a long history with former Local 247 President, Gib Whitlock, and was certainly a friend of this Local. He had been President for over 30 years.
- Our Safeway bargaining committee met at the end of September and had three different two-day bargaining sessions in October, as well as the single day on November 14th. The Company came in with a small package of proposals but asked for even more in their monetary package than they achieved through the Vince Ready award with Local 1518. Almost all the discussions have focused on the non-monetary, or non-cost items, and by the end of the November 14th meeting, we had resolved most issues. At one point, the company reversed their position, did an about-face just when we felt like we were making progress, and that caused us to have a meeting of the committee prior to the last November date to talk strategy. We'd all agreed at the beginning of the talks that we did not feel we could go back to the membership and recommend a settlement mirroring the Ready award, which was what we knew the company was seeking.
- We wanted to clear off as much as possible should we be proceeding to final offer selection. But that in mind, we tabled the package of proposals, looking with the withdrawal of some of our issues to their issues, and some other settlement options. That seemed to get talks going again and we were able to have a brief monetary discussion in the afternoon of the 14th.
- Our dilemma is that the company knows it has the award sitting out there and they won't stray from it. We believe that although it's likely we get stuck with portions of it, some issues should be different as many of the things Vince awarded were based on the financial documents shared with them on the status of the company at that time, well over a year ago. The information determined what stores were deemed profitable and non-profitable, and what should be placed in group A or B. Since then, the Company has closed or converted numerous stores, and we believe that the remaining locations are doing much better and that should be what is looked at when deciding our issues, not just copying the Ready Award.
- Another big issue is the time frame of the Award. In his decision, Mr. Ready gave the company cost savings for 36 months before the B's store is revert back to the full agreement. The company has told us that they feel they should receive the same amount of savings and time from us regardless of their financial status. This could result in a scenario where a store that has returned to profitability be returned to the full agreement for Local 1518 but be deemed a losing store for us. It's a tricky situation as the FreshCo decisions showed us that arbitrators seem reluctant to change the terms. I'm talking about the two locals, even when we have a good argument.
- We'll be sitting down soon with our union legal counsel to discuss the best way to proceed. Cathy Shannon has chaired the negotiations and is doing a great job. Bruce Jackson has also been involved; and Suzanne and I have been in and out of the process as well. One of the reasons

I haven't been there is that just this past Sunday we ratified an agreement for a new warehouse Sobeys will be opening in South Surrey in the summer of 2020.

- We currently represent Cold Logic facilities which do Sobeys work. Sobeys announced their plans on building a new warehouse quite some time ago but were always secretive on the details. In September, the Company informed Cold Logic that they would not be getting the contract to run the new warehouse and Sobeys would operate it themselves. Sobeys then reached out to us and said they were interested in having the Cold Logic members move to the new facility if we could work out a collective agreement.
- They also informed us they plan to offer employment to approximately 50 Sobeys employees working in a small non-union warehouse, also in South Surrey. They gave us access to talk to the non-union group and we also met with our Stewards at Cold Logic. Shortly thereafter, we formed a negotiating committee with representation from all 3 warehouses and set dates with the Company. Many of the dates conflicted with the retail dates. It was quite challenging for the committee as there were dramatic differences between the union and non-union warehouses on wage scales, job selection process, benefits, and overall operations. We met with the Company for 5 days and reached an agreement on November 12th and ratified on November 17. The November 17 ratification date was included in the Company's final offer, as they had previously set a deadline at the end of October to reach an agreement.
- The agreement contains major changes to the pay scales. Full-time employees get a \$0.50-\$1 raise immediately upon moving into the new warehouse and progress to a new top rate of \$26/hour. There was an incentive plan, to earn up to another \$4, 40 hours sick time a year, increased vacation entitlement, credit for stat holiday hours for overtime, and a form of retro to June 1 regardless of movement date, as well as lots of good language improvements. Certainly a different process with the two groups both there at the table.
- There was a big push being made from the UFCW National Office to look at alternative forms of communicating with members. As an example, over 90% of the organizing leads that come through the National Office this year were submitted via text. Not email or phone in, the first contact was via text message. The National Office plans on running an engagement conference in November of next year, and details are just being finalized.
- The National is also planning to run a pilot program at a couple of BC employers utilizing the webCampus platform, to allow members looking to become journey person meatcutters the opportunity to do the written part of the test online, as opposed to travelling to a classroom setting. Stongs and Fresh St are participating in the trial and Bruce Jackson from the Local is assisting the National in setting it up.
- We recently conducted four collective bargaining education sessions with the National Office Education Department for members at FG Deli. They were conducted by Marv Funk, Education Director of UFCW Canada. The sessions were unique as Marv is based out of Toronto and we utilized web cameras and projectors to facilitate the course. The sessions were successful and covered negotiations from start to finish. We had good feedback from the participants who felt they learned a lot.
- UFCW Canada recently made a presentation at the National Council meeting on a national campaign on BPA and BPS. This was a follow-up to the presentation made at the National Defence Fund Conference. UFCW Canada partnered with environmentaldefense.ca, Mind the Store, a website that produces report cards on retailer action to eliminate toxic chemicals, and Breast Cancer Action Quebec to try to raise awareness over this issue and protect members' health and safety by getting employers to switch products. They have been targeting major food retailers, focusing on Walmart, Costco, Loblaws, Metro and Sobeys.

Few Common Questions regarding Sobeys bargaining that Cathy Shannon addressed:

Will there be a buyout offer to members? Neither the Union or the employer proposed a buyout during this process. However, we do believe because the employer has indicated they are

looking for the same savings they received in the special offer award by Vince Ready, that there may be some interest on the Employer's part to do the same with us.

How long will it be before we have an agreement with Sobeys? When we discussed some of the monetary issue with the Employer, we gave them some positions to consider and they have asked for some time to analyze them before they respond to us. We are still waiting for their response. At this time, we do not even have an Arbitrator that we have agreed upon where we go to final offer selection, so we don't have a timeline.

- A brief update on organizing... on October 16th we submitted an application for the Tilray Cannabis facility near Nanaimo. We had 82 cards going in and believed the employee numbers to be around 120-140. The employer then submitted a list of over 200 people, including an offsite call-centre and we challenged 62 votes.
- Shane Dawson, our Organizing Director had never seen that many challenged ballots. He was assisted in the process by the National Office Staff, along with Steve, Guy & Johnny for the vote. It's been a complicated issue for Patty at the law firm to deal with, as we've been trying to play catch up with some of the information we're receiving from the Company.
- You'll see a large legal bill in the next quarter but that's the cost of organizing. Normally, the Local would be doing most of the groundwork but the issues were so specific in this case, that Patty needed to talk directly to the people involved. The National Office is also putting a big push on getting UFCW's name out there as the Union for cannabis workers in Canada. Shane recently did an interview with Globe & Mail. We are continuing to sign cards since the ballot box was sealed to keep up communications with the group.
- In Ontario, they are also challenging the provincial legislation that is declared cannabis members are farm workers and cannot be organized.

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

8. **Bargaining Report**

- A deal was reached by a large margin on October 8th for YIG Davies St. The problem we've had over the last few years with the increase of minimum wage has been addressed and the scales will change with any future increases to the minimum wage. Qualifying for benefits has been reduced by two years for dental, vision, prescription drugs, which was a big issue for their part-timers.
- A similar agreement was reached on November 7th and was voted in favour on November 19th for the YIG Creston.
- Aramark voted on October 16th to accept a new collective agreement. Wage increases were the biggest issue, and for the next 3 years, in the 3 year agreement, they'll get increases.
- We are bargaining Fresh Street Surrey this week and reached a recommended agreement on Wednesday, November 20th. Voting will take place on December 5th at the Sheraton Guildford. It was quick as it is based on the January agreement that we ratified in the West Van Fresh St location, which we use the assistance of a mediator to reach a very good agreement.
- The person we have been dealing with in BC for Loblaw negotiations has been assigned to several banners, several locations, so dates are backed up a bit. They have assigned someone from Alberta to help.
- We have dates in January for Stongs' Northwoods; waiting for Loblaw to confirm dates for Extra Foods Quesnel as their contract has been expired for quite a while.
- YIG Langley is next, then No Frills in Salmon Arms, and Real Canadian Wholesale Club is also coming up in the new year, along with Centennial Foods.

9. **Education & Training Report**

- Current membership courses will be wrapping up the 2nd week in December. There are still space available for some upcoming classes.
- Superstore Scheduling course was cancelled due to low enrollment but we are planning to offer it again in the new year.
- We are currently planning the Winter course schedule which will start January 20. All new courses will be posted on our website near the end of December.
- UFCW members across Canada have access to free online courses through webCampusPlus. Visit www.ufcw.ca/webcampus. All you have to do to get started is create an account.
- We had 9 members from across the province attend our Introduction to Stewardship program in September. Another session will most likely be offered in February.
- We are planning new courses for our Shop Stewards for the new year.
- The deadline for scholarships & education grants was September 30th. 13 - \$1,500 scholarship for full-time studies and 2 - \$750 grants for part-time studies were awarded.

10. **New Business**

- No new business.

2 questions taken by members on the call.

11. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:33 pm.

Member Draw - was conducted electronically. 3 winners were picked; each receiving a \$100 gift card.