

Telephone Town Hall – November 25, 2021 @ 7 p.m.

1. **Meeting called to order** at 7:03 pm by Dan Goodman.
2. **Roll Call of officers:**
Dan Goodman, **President**; Charles Pratt, **Secretary-Treasurer**; Brian Taylor, **Recorder**; Margaret Robins **VP #1**; Alicia Whitehead **VP #2**; Susan Espin, **VP #3**; Sandra Peters, **VP #4**; Sandra Geldart **VP #7**; David Mowatt **VP #8**; Doug Insley **VP #11**; Dawn Stevenson **VP #12**; Cathy Shannon **VP 14**;
3. **Adoption of Agenda**
m / s / c to adopt the agenda
4. **Adoption of September 2, 2021 Minutes** as posted on UFCW 247 website
m / s / c to adopt the minutes
5. **President's Report**
 - Congratulations to all the candidates who were elected to the Local Executive Board in our recent election. Thank you to members who participated by voting. Thank you to UFCW National Staff who assisted us in running the election.
 - Update on the impact of the torrential rains and flooding in our province – We posted something on our website to update members on what Sobeys and Loblaws are doing for impacted members or store closures. No Superstores or Safeway locations have closed, but certainly some have experienced panic buying and have run into issues getting product. A No Frills location was forced to close. Members there will be paid any scheduled shifts during that time.
 - Both Loblaws & Sobeys have been making arrangements to have members who cannot get to work access to hours at other locations.
 - Some of our production facilities have had to deal with a shortage of product & the inability to get the products out to their customers.
 - We've also been talking with Local 1518 & our National Office on the best way to assist, not just UFCW members but other British Columbians impacted. If someone is in a position of need, please get in touch with us.
 - You probably heard the announcement yesterday from the provincial government that beginning Jan. 1, 2022, sick leave will be standard for workers in BC with a minimum of 5 paid sick days each year. BC becomes the first province in Canada to legislate this level of paid time off for worker who fall ill. While this is a significant milestone, we were all hoping for 10 sick days that the BC Federation of Labour, along with many unions, including this one, campaigned for over the summer. We will continue to post updates on our website and links on our social media outlets as the implementation details are released.
 - On the COVID front, we continue to rely on Tony Glavin and his team at Koskie Glavin to help guide us through the minefield of health guidelines and vaccination requirements. Tony recently forwarded me two arbitration decisions, both of which centered on challenges to employers implementing mandatory vaccination requirements. While we have not seen this in any of the workplaces we represent, the decisions in both cases upheld the employers' right. The two issues we hear the most about are either challenging the Provincial Health Order (PHO), or the company policy. Tony said the following:
 - Challenging the Provincial Health Order – there has not been one serious challenge to the BC Provincial Health Order on charter grounds. We are in the middle of a global pandemic where

hundreds of thousands of people have died. In BC, we are cancelling surgeries as a result of non-masking and non-vaxxing individuals not following PHO orders or even recommendations on vaccinations. There is probably a 0% change of successfully challenging the PHO mask mandate in BC. As it is a government order, it would need to be a charter challenge.

- Challenging Company Policy – the Companies are merely implementing prudent measures to ensure staff & the public are adequately protected from contracting COVID. Most policies are reasonable and unassailable as they follow the PHO order as it pertains to its workplace. There is probably 0% change of overturning these types of policies. However, the policy must permit for legitimate exemptions based on human rights grounds, only to the point of undue hardship on the Company.
- Someone may raise a medical condition. The company still has to see if it can accommodate, but it will not have to accommodate that if the accommodation would involve putting co-workers and the public at risk of infection.
- 2021 has been a unique year with respect to changes within our Local. We have had five people retire this year.
- Loblaw bargaining is front and centre on many members' minds. On the Retail side, we have met for 11 days with 3 more days coming up next week. We have spent a considerable amount of time talking about the new scheduling module the Company wants to introduce called Dynamic Scheduling. We discussed this at prior meetings and then our store visits but to recap, this is a scheduling process that allows members to access shifts, offer up shifts or swap shifts through an app-based system.
- This change impacts many other areas of the collective agreement and has dominated our talks up to this point. We believe we have resolved most of our concerns last meeting, and hopefully we will get through the other outstanding non-monetary items next week, and then we can hopefully be in a position to get onto the monetary issues.
- There was a meeting last week of the Trustees for the UFCW Health & Welfare Trust and the news is very good. AS with the growing surplus, we are looking to make benefit improvements based on the health of the plan. Improvement options have been asked of the advisors and a follow-up meeting is scheduled for early 2022.
- On the Sobeys front, we served separate notice under the reopener letter of understanding to bargain each of the Safeway Extra locations. Bargaining dates for Local 247 have not been set, but Local 1518 did have some dates scheduled for October. Before their bargaining commenced, the employer approached both Locals, with the proposal under the reopener to have the three Safeway Extra stores return to the Safeway Collective Agreement.
- The employer put their proposal forward to both locals and discussions began on how that process could be done. Cathy Shannon & Gordon McDonald, a Safeway Extra member on our Executive Board & Negotiating Committee to discuss the parameters of the proposed memorandum of agreement. Discussions and proposals went back & forth with changes from both Locals until a document was ready for finalizing. The final MOA that returns the stores back to the Safeway CBA was completed with an effective date of December 5th. There were issues specific to the Grid B group in those locations that were protected and maintained.
- Safeway Extra members will now have access to the provisions of the Safeway agreement, which include wage increase for all employees, including Grid A & B that are scheduled for January 1, 2022 as well as cross classification scheduling for those members to access more hours if they choose.
- Still at Sobeys - The Meat Cutter Training Program continues with positive feedback from the trainer and trainees in the program. The first training group will complete the training program on February 23rd. The second group would start at the end of February after the first group completes their training.
- We recently had discussions with Sobeys & Local 1518 on the re-opener option that both Locals had in 2022 for Appendix A stores. Both Locals were of the same opinion after discussing it with

their Executive Sobeys members, that with the expiration of the full collective agreement in early 2023, it makes no sense to bargain for only a group of stores, especially when there was a final offer selection process linked to the re-opener. We are in a much better situation to bargain as a full group and have the threat of a work stoppage if necessary. We will continue to coordinate with 1518 on the 2023 Sobeys bargaining. We are happy to announce that the Davie St Safeway store will be returning to Appendix A status effective December 5th.

- On the National front, UFCW Canada is hopefully that in 2022, we will see a return to in-person Conference & Conventions. The National Defense Fund Conference is scheduled for July 10th - 13th in Vancouver, and they're planning a National Council Convention in Toronto in August of next year.
- UFCW Local 1006A was successful in their arbitration with Loblaw over Loblaw's failure to recognize the new Truth & Reconciliation stat holiday. Discussion are underway nationally on the impact of the arbitration award on other regions, including ours. As previously mentioned, we have proposals on this issue as part of our package.

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

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

- Loblaw Retail bargaining – we're back at the table on November 29, 30 & December 1 to continue with the non-monetary proposals remaining on the table. There remains some very significant non-monetary items that we believe will be successfully negotiated into the final package. These are issues ranked high on the members' list of must-have proposals when we conducted the online survey, and we're not prepared to walk away without them. I believe over the course of the next one or possibly two sessions, we'll have completed the achievable non-monetary proposals.
- On the monetary proposals, the vast majority of our proposals are monetary in nature. Employers are acutely aware of their difficulty in hiring and retaining staff in many areas of the province and that they must improve the wage scale in order to resolve its ongoing staff shortages.
- Loblaw Distribution Centre bargaining – Dean Patriquin advises that the Committee met with the employer on November 17 and continued to discuss issues surrounding the basic work week breaks and overtime provisions. The next scheduled date for DC bargaining is December 1st 2021. They're optimistic that the outstanding non-monetary issues will likely be resolved at that session.

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

7. **Bargaining Report**

- YIG Fernie ratified on October 27, 2021 & YIG Kamloops ratified on November 3, 2021. Both were 6-year deals with significant improvements for part-time benefits and protection of the wage scale against erosion caused by minimum wage increases.
- West Vancouver IGA are being set to begin bargaining in January 2022, and we are in the process of soliciting proposals from the membership currently.

8. **Education & Training Report**

- We hosted one last Introduction to Stewardship course at the Training Centre on Sept. 14, 15 & 16 and that was just before moving out of that location on Sept. 30th.
- Today, we hosted one of two bullying and harassment courses being offered to stores at the PoCo Inn Hotel. The second one will happen next week. After these two courses, two other education offerings will resume early in the new year.
- We continue to offer the Food Handler's Certification Course to all our members across the province. This is offered virtually and free of charge. Members also have access to a large selection of online courses through webCampus. It was recently announced that a new category

of skill development courses called Quick Learn has been added to the list of courses. This new category follows the same format of our now popular 15-mins on-the-go courses. This new selection of digital skill modules includes quick tips on the many features of Word, Excel and Outlook.

- 13 \$1,500 Iorio Scholarships & three \$750 Eddy Education Grants were awarded to random draw winners last month. There are also two members from our Local who won the scholarship draw from the National Office.
- 2000 Orange shirts were distributed amongst our membership for the National Day of Truth & Reconciliation. Everyone who was mailed a shirt received a note encouraging them to wear their shirt proudly on any given day, but especially on Sept. 30th. Many members sent us photos of them wearing their shirts at work.
- Our Local was invited by the UFCW Women's Network to partake in their 14th Biannual Convention last month. 20 members and three Union Representatives were able to participate in the one-day virtual event that focused on resiliency through leadership.
- Last month we started an engagement campaign using the Hustle app. This is a texting service that our National Office is already using in the Organizing Department. We opted to use this technology to engage with new hires by texting these who have been employed at Loblaw for at least 4 months. The text we send out is short and lets them know that given their hiring date, they may now be eligible for benefits. So far, this technology has proven to be fast and effective in reaching out to our members and we plan on using it in different campaigns in the new year.
- It is important that we have your cellphone number on file, as this will ensure that we can reach you when relevant information becomes available. We continue looking for effective and efficient ways of keeping members informed, so in addition to accurate phone numbers, we will also be relying on email addresses. We ask members to help us keep their contact information current by going to our website & filling out the pop-up form that welcomes you to our page. Updating your file with your employer is just as important.
- Our Annual Children's Christmas party held at the Burnaby Village Museum is happening on Monday, December 6. In addition, we are expanding on this tradition by offering two new events, one in Kelowna and one in Nanaimo.

9. **New Business**

- No new business.

Q&A PERIOD -

Charles Pratt made this note: many questions all relate to the new employment standards change with the minimum of five paid sick days per year. Just to clarify, that is not five additional paid sick days in addition to what you currently have. If you have five currently, you do not go to 10. The language is that employers must provide you with a minimum of five.

3 questions taken by members on the call.

10. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:36 pm.

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