

Telephone Town Hall – Sept. 3, 2025 @ 7 p.m.

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1. **Meeting called to order** at 7:02 pm by Dan Goodman.
2. **Roll Call of officers:**  
Dan Goodman, **President**; Cathy Shannon, **Secretary-Treasurer**; Brian Taylor, **Recorder**; Margaret Robins, **VP 1**; Alicia Whitehead, **VP 2**; Nalini Nowrang, **VP 3**; Sandra Peters, **VP4**; Michele Venables, **VP #7**; Kirste Hawgood, **VP 10**; Doug Insley, **VP 11**; Dawn Stevenson, **VP #12**;
3. **Adoption of Agenda**  
m / s / c to adopt the agenda
4. **Adoption of May 29, 2025 Minutes** as posted on UFCW 247 website  
m / s / c to adopt the minutes
5. **President's Report**
  - Over the previous two weeks the election petition process was carried out, and last week we held in-person nomination meetings for the various vice president positions. I, Cathy Shannon, and recorder Brian Taylor handed in our petitions on Thursday and Friday. No other petitions were submitted, so there will not be an election for the positions of president, secretary treasurer, and recorder. There was one vice president position where there were multiple nominees, but John Lewinsky has decided not to seek re-election, and therefore Tracy McCarthy will be sworn into the vice president six position in the new year. All other vice presidents were re-elected by acclamation. I want to thank John for his many years on the board. Thanks to election chair Lily Olson, committee members Charles, Dave, and Wendy, the UFCW national office staff who ran the nomination meetings, and the local admin staff who prepared all the documents, arranged the meeting locations, and coordinated travel in the middle of an Air Canada dispute.
  - The sale of the last three BC Tree Fruits properties has been finalized, and they will now operate as BC Tree Fruit Partnership. The Oliver Packing facility is operational with a small crew, and fruit is also being accepted into the cold storage sites. Several former members have returned, and we expect more will be hired when fruit volumes increase. We continue to have conversations with the new owners as they work through payroll, benefits, and workplace conditions that they are not familiar with. And most of these communications have been positive.
  - The court has authorized the monitor to release payments for approved claims, which include member's payments under the employment standards, individual and group termination, and vacation pay. Payments for these claims should be finalized late October or early November. The claims brought forth by the union for lack of adjustment plan notice was not approved, and this will be adjudicated by the court in the coming weeks.
  - We recently received notice that BC Tree Fruits with the monitor intended to terminate the BC Tree Fruit industry pension plan without the union's consent. Our legal counsel acted immediately and successfully obtained a court order that allowed for an application to the court that the plan ought to not have been terminated. Although the union has several options on how to proceed, our priority is keeping the members in a pension plan and protecting their rights throughout this process.
  - Since COVID, we have seen increased levels of calls from members seeking help for non-collective agreement or non-traditional issues, as they often see their union as their only option to reach

out to when seeking help. This has significantly increased the workload of staff, and we are always looking for tools to assist them in doing their jobs. With this in mind, a mental health course has been booked for our staff for early October. The four-hour course will focus on mental health awareness and resiliency, tools to work with clients showing challenging behaviors, and preventing compassion fatigue. We will provide feedback next meeting.

- Loblaw has spoken with all members impacted by the impending closures of the optical departments in Real Canadian Superstores across Canada. Members were to be given options on movement within the store to maintain employment while also receiving an enhanced severance offering negotiated by the union, regardless of whether they left or stayed with the company. We will continue to work with members who need assistance during this process.

#### Eric Seto – Loblaw Report:

- Shift Marketplace issue has arisen. Members who have Android phones have reported that they are unable to screenshot their schedules. Upon inquiry with the company, the security update from the developer has been updated, and this will affect iPhone users by the end of August. We're currently looking into this issue with the company to find out their reasoning for the security update.
- Loblaw's Distribution Centre # 1935, Marine Drive, is currently in the process of moving towards pallet purity and have installed equipment to assist with errors associated with pallet purity. There are concerns with weight and ergonomics, and as well as fatigue affecting performance, and heavier items that need to be located higher on a pallet. We have requested assistance from our UFCW international engineers, and they have been scheduled to come in to assist, assess, validate the engineer's standards, and assist the union representatives with questions on the floor.
- Loblaw's Distribution Centre #1957, South Surrey, is also currently in process to put containers on Standard Time, a performance monitoring system. This is currently underway as Loblaw engineers are currently conducting time studies and collecting data. We have also requested the assistance of the UFCW International Engineers to audit and validate whatever standards that they come out with.
- Update on our Zero Tolerance Cannabis Grievance for distribution center employees. As a safety-sensitive workplace, under the Loblaw's drug and alcohol policy, members working in the distribution centers who are involved in accidents can be triggered to have a drug test. Specifically, members who have been required to take a drug test are sent home pending the results. And then it's now come to the union's attention that recreational cannabis users who have consumed cannabis the night before their shift, if they have tested positive for THC, the employer has taken a position that this is a violation of the Zero Tolerance Policy and proceeded to terminate. The union strongly disagrees with the Zero Tolerance Policy, as this is very clearly not a measure of impairment. This issue has been referred to arbitration and we're currently awaiting dates.
- Terminations in the Distribution Centre for non-culpable absenteeism or, as Loblaw calls it, their Attendance Support Program. This program is deemed by the warehouse to be non-disciplinary program. Attendance targets are set for individuals who miss days of work due to such legislative leaves as family leave, sick day leave, even injuries outside of work. The company has recently begun terminating employees under this program. We are currently looking at filing a policy grievance and securing a legal opinion.
- Recently an issue has been identified where the Burnaby Wholesale Club has been not scheduling grocery employees by seniority. Upon further investigation we discovered that this is a province-wide issue. And even though Loblaw uses the same persona system, we do not understand why the Wholesale Club cannot print the schedules correctly. This has minimal impact in smaller stores, as a lot of members already know who has more seniority and availability. The system issues we're able to identify were junior members slotted over senior members, and we've also discovered the availabilities were not in accordance with the CBA.

International students were misclassified as any time, and schedules were not being printed properly, therefore resulting in junior persons receiving more hours. The policy grievance that we have filed we believe is over 200 hours have been given out improperly, and we're currently scheduling a grievance meeting to resolve that.

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

## 6. **Secretary-Treasurer Report**

- Sobeys has advised the union that they will be proceeding under LOU 27 of the collective agreement regarding third party kiosks. The employer has announced their plan to move forward with 7 third-party sushi kiosks. Possible start dates for these locations are slated to open sometime in September or October. There are 2 existing third-party sushi locations, with a company called Bento Sushi. Both of these were in Safeway extra locations.
- Both of these sushi kiosks have now been replaced by Zenshi, the new sushi company that Sobeys has contracted for all seven locations we were told about. Two of the other seven store locations slated to open third-party sushi kiosks are stores 4931 & 4976. These locations used to have an Asian food offering when they were first reopened several years ago, and they used to make in-store sushi. However, these members, who were scheduled as a separate department, were later merged into the deli department as one group of deli workers when Sobeys took over from Safeway. The other three remaining Safeway store locations that will open sushi kiosks are stores 4979, 4980 & 4998. We believe there will be other locations coming.
- Sobeys has recently introduced a national standard footwear program for their stores. Although there isn't a reference to a footwear allowance in the Safeway Collective Agreement, the employer has advised us they are willing to provide something to union members required to wear proper footwear in some of the department. The employer will advise employees who are required to wear these and provide full-time members with \$75 annually and part-time employees \$75 every two years.
- Both UFCW 247 and UFCW 1518 reached an agreement with Safeway on a minimum wage resolution. Our communications team emailed the shop stewards, informing them first of the minimum wage agreement, and then the members. For those of you who did not receive the email update about the minimum wage resolution, please contact our office to make sure we have your correct email address on file. The deposit pay period was August 28th for those eligible.
- The Safeway Sizzle meat program rollout was completed, and we will wait to see what the outcome was on those added hours that were given to the meat departments, and what that looks like for future hours. We've been working to make sure that the hours are being scheduled by seniority and to the correct classification of members.
- We recently emailed Safeway members regarding the opening of a kitchen commissary that is coming to BC. We know this will have an impact on our members' hours, and it will also have an impact on other members in the stores
- The burger program is a kit, a box of items coming into the meat department to use to make the fresh burgers that are currently sold in the meat service case. After our email update to you, we have since met with Tony Glavin, our legal counsel, and the company representative, Sean Naldred, as well as their legal counsel to discuss the commissary and to set some dates for further discussions. We have set some dates aside in September to look at the impact on our members and to discuss representational rights for those members in the new kitchen commissary. There are some stores currently receiving products from the Alberta kitchen commissary, and we have filed a grievance under LOU #8 to address that issue .

- We want to update members regarding the meat-cutting TRU scholarship program that we have been working on. First, we want to thank Alicia, one of our executive board members and a journey person meat cutter on the float staff for stepping up and helping to support and sponsor members interested in the meat-cutting trade. Alicia offered to assist in gathering all the information needed to share with members regarding the Meat Union Scholarship and our partnership with Thompson River University. Our goal was to have the information available to our members on the meatcutting program before applying for a scholarship. The information is now on our website under the education and scholarship section. We have checked in with Cory Davidson, the instructor and trainer of the program at Thompson River University, and he was appreciative of the work that was done, the scholarships and ongoing sponsorship from UFCW 247.

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

## 7. **Bargaining Report**

- We reached a recommended settlement with IGA, after month of waiting for dates. The committee stayed solid, as there were some concessions that the employer was looking at, that would not be part of our recommended package. It could not be justified. The members voted on July 21st and 22nd to accept the new offer. Members will receive retroactive payback to January 1st of this year. There were many changes, as the collective agreement used to be for multiple locations, so the language was cleaned up to reflect the single bargaining unit. Improvements were made to some of the existing benefits, with a new psychological benefit added.
- We started negotiations at the Sobeys Warehouse with a long list of proposals, as this is the first set of bargaining since the original contract. We've made some progress on non-monetary items and hope to get to the monetary ones on September 9th to 11th.
- We met the first week of July with the YIG in Kelowna. We were close to getting a deal, but the company wouldn't move on how the rates will have a guaranteed gap over the minimum wage for top-rate clerks. We need to have some assurance that there will always be a minimum wage gap. We are meeting this week, hoping to get a deal that we can recommend.
- With Aramark, we voted on a package that was narrowly rejected on July 31st. The company has not offered any enhancements or meeting dates, but a meeting was held with members to discuss next steps.
- A letter was sent out to FG Deli to commence bargaining. We had asked to start early but the company hadn't offered dates. The collective agreement expires in December and we are still hopeful that we can start before then. We have a proposal conference set for September 13th. Elections for some of the Bargaining Committee will be held on that day.
- With the Real Canadian Wholesale Clubs, we have dates scheduled for October 20th for all locations. Proposal forms were sent out, and we had a great response from the membership adding their opinions on what needs to be addressed to improve the workplace in many areas.

## 8. **Engagement & Education Report**

- Our engagement efforts have kept us busy this summer. Shortly after a few of our originally scheduled events were shared on social media, we started receiving requests from members who wished that they could also have a barbecue in their area. We communicated with our Engagement Committee and added events whenever possible. By the end of this summer, we will have hosted five in-store union open houses and 13 regional barbecues either at a store or at a park. We also participated in Vancouver Pride, Comox Pride, National Indigenous Peoples Day in Langley, Overdose Awareness Day in Victoria, and celebrated Labor Day on Vancouver Island.

- I will also add that all these events are in addition to the many open houses and Coffee with Your Rep events that your union reps continue to schedule in your workplaces. We continue to distribute union membership pins to members who have been UFCW members for 20, 30, or 40 years.
- New engagement events are being planned for the fall. If you have suggestions for your Engagement Committee or want to get involved, contact Ximena.
- In terms of education for shop stewards and activists, we have scheduled an introduction to stewardship course happening September 16th through the 18th, and two one-day awesome workshops. These are meant to empower stewards through member engagement. Those will happen on September 10th and 11th. The coming months will bring more Superstore scheduling education sessions as well as health and safety education for our Occupational Health and Safety Committee members and stewards.
- Application process for the \$1,500 IORIO scholarships and \$750 EDDY Education grants closes on September 30th. Visit our website to apply. Winners will be contacted and announced by the end of October.

## 9. **Communications Report**

- Some of the major projects since May. This is not inclusive of the usual design and writing and social media stuff that we do. We've been regularly scheduling effective email campaigns promoting all the rep open houses, the scheduled visits, and the many events that The Locals' put on. Looking at our systems today since our last meeting, we've sent out over 54,000 emails to members.
- We've renewed the scholarship forms on our website and the promotion of scholarship information. We really want those resources to be really available to people and really easy for people to access because they are a great benefit to members. We've been developing some bargaining resources for members as well, including online bargaining surveys and a bargaining basics resource for members on our website.
- We've been really ramping up our internal communication as well. We've been doing weekly reports for Local staff on different things that are going on around The Local, as well as a new monthly steward newsletter to help connect our activists across The Local. And we've had really, really good feedback from our members on that, and our stewards. And the main thing is communication has to be that sort of thing that brings us all together and gets us all on the same page on things. And so that's what we're making a great effort to try and do.
- We worked hard on the creating, promoting, and doing analysis and writing a report on our superstore member survey.
- Some of the major upcoming projects that we have on the go include supporting our FG Deli members as they're heading into negotiations with their employer. We're going to have a specific page on our website just for them with all of their updates, including video updates from their Bargaining Committee, and just a ton of information for members so everyone's on the same page and everyone is getting the same information efficiently around their bargaining. And that's something that we hope that we'll be able to roll out to other workplaces and other groups within our membership as well.
- We are also going to be supporting education and engagement initiatives leading from the member surveys. We've started this initiative which came to fruition in the summer, affecting the Superstore members, this union member survey. And we called it Your Union, Your Say, because at the end of the day it is your union and it is your say, and we want to hear what you have to say. We have our own ideas about the kinds of things that we want to do. But it's actually really effective if we're able to hear it from members. Superstore members will have received a report from us on that survey, and I think it would've gone out in late August.

- And so today I just want to provide a brief report and summary to everyone because, one, the Superstore members on the call should be aware of the results and the implications and, two, all members would benefit from hearing about this because this is an initiative that we want to bring forward and extend to all of the workplaces that we have out there. And it's an initiative that we call Leading by Listening to Members.
- So just to share a few basic details about the Superstore survey, how we carried it out, and briefly summarize the results. The survey was carried out between June 24th and August 8th, so it was about a six-week period, and we received 897 responses out of a total population of 8,800 Superstore members. This survey allows for both quantitative and qualitative assessments of the responses, so we're looking at number responses but also what people said. So we made sure that in the survey we gave a lot of space for people to explain why they were answering things a certain way. In terms of the reliability of the survey, the sample size that we had and the responses that we got gave us a margin of error of only 3%, with a confidence level of 95%. The survey was explained in further detail. For information, please contact Mike at [communications@ufcw247.com](mailto:communications@ufcw247.com).
- So many of these projects, I'm happy to say they're already being planned, and so we're on the right path. We felt that all in all, the survey was really good. We were really happy to do it. And for all the other members, so the non-Superstore members, keep your eyes peeled for social media and for your email. You're going to see a lot more of that stuff coming forward because we are really, really interested in hearing what members think, and we'll be implementing these surveys going forward.

#### 10. **New Business**

- No new business.

**Q&A PERIOD – 6** questions were asked & answered and others were unique and individual of nature therefore members were called back.

#### **Dan made the following comments on the election process and the last four years.**

*"We have had a number of key words that we have repeated over and over since 2021. Inclusion, accessibility, engagement, and there's been many more. We wanted to make this a member-driven union, but in order to do that we needed members to feel like they were being heard, or they weren't going to participate.*

*So we invested resources in building trust and a stronger communication network. We hired a full-time communications coordinator who developed steward newsletters, member surveys, member support initiatives like the Not Our Job campaign, a new member booklet, and leading the UFCW nationally in new and progressive ways to connect with our members. This also allowed our training and engagement coordinator to expand our training offerings, overhauling health and safety committees, refreshing the steward training and establishing the first UFCW Engagement Committee in Canada. New engaged members providing feedback to The Local on what members wanted from their union.*

*Our 2024 Engagement Conference was an overwhelming success and is now being copied across Canada. 150 members learning how their Local worked and talking to each other, sharing work and personal experiences, and creating lasting bonds. Almost every day somebody asks me when the next one will be held, and the answer is to be determined at this point. This summer we've had over 1,200 members, including 170 tomorrow, attend one of our barbecues. And we all learned a little more about each other by having the chance to interact outside of the workplace.*

*We will continue to support causes important to members, like overdose awareness events, Pride Parade and functions, the shoe memorial to end violence against women, indigenous peoples days, while continuing to provide social opportunities for members to connect with each other at pub nights, bowling nights, kids' Christmas parties, and movie nights. These events bring members together, allowing us to engage with them and make a connection. I'm extremely proud of our staff, who we challenged with new servicing*

*expectations. Having them more accessible to members and requiring them to expand their servicing time so all members had a chance to see their rep.*

*As Ximena reported, our staff are scheduling open houses or coffee talk sessions, providing opportunities for members to gain information, meet leadership, or just sit and have a donut and ask a question. So to me this is a bit of validation that we got a few things right in the last four years. The slogan uniting your union wasn't by accident. It's what we believe and what we know is currently happening. There will always be critics and doubters, and that's okay. Everyone has a right to their opinion and, through accessibility and conversation and education, we can always hope to find common ground.*

*But here's some things that are not okay: it's not okay to put out false information on social media and then hiding behind words like, "Sources say," or, "Rumor has it." That's a scare tactic, and it's irresponsible and certainly not a sign of leadership. Someone posted that they heard we were going to raise our dues last year. We haven't raised our dues since 2018, and only then because our international union raised the per-cap payments we pay for each member. Those increases are voted on by members at an international convention. We won't raise our dues in the next four years unless the international does. That's a fact, not a rumor.*

*It's also not okay to attack someone for asking a question that you didn't like and then block them or belittle their opinion just because they have one that's different from yours. That's not leadership, it's weakness. And it's certainly not okay to resort to personal attacks, attempting to post unflattering photos, or even creating new ones, all the while hiding behind a keyboard. It's called trolling. Trolling refers to the act of deliberately posting inflammatory, offensive, or disruptive comments online to provoke a strong emotional reaction, cause drama, or disrupt online communities. That's not what leaders do. It's cheap and petty.*

*I'm very proud to be your president, and I do not take the responsibility lightly. So thank you to all the members I spoke to in the last four years and to the almost 2,000 who supported us by signing our petitions. Our focus is exactly as we said: unite your union. Make it the best union that can possibly be. And to do that, we need you to help us. So join us in this journey. Get involved, take some training, be curious. Learn more about this Local. Help us be great."*

## **11. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:59 pm.

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