

Telephone Town Hall – May 28, 2026 @ 7 p.m.

1. **Meeting called to order** at 7:03 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 Peter, **VP 4**; Tracy McCarthy, **VP 6**; Peter Parmar, **VP 8**; Kirste Hawgood, **VP 10**; Doug Insley, **VP 11**; Dawn Stevenson, **VP 12**; Eric Seto, **VP 14**;
3. **Adoption of Agenda**
m / s / c to adopt the agenda
4. **Adoption of February 18, 2026 Minutes** as posted on UFCW 247 website
m / s / c to adopt the minutes
5. **Audited Financial Statement**
 - Cathy Shannon read the 2025 audited financial statement.m / s / c to adopt the 2025 Audited Financial Statement as read.
6. **President's Report**
 - The Board unanimously approved Dave French for the vacancy of our VP 5 position.
 - Update on BC Tree Fruit Partnership; on the issue of ESA termination pay, we can confirm that the payments have been issued and received. Payments range from about \$1,000 to \$48,000 depending on each member's years of service and rate of pay. In total, approximately more than \$1.5 million has been paid out. If members already received money through WEPP or EI, those amounts were deducted from their ESA payments.

The union took a number of steps last year to pursue adjustment plan damages for all effective employees under Section 54 complaint filed with the BC Labour Relations Board in July 2024. As of last week, the receiver was asking the court to reduce the Union's claim to about \$417,698. Estimated individual payments are currently expected to range from \$7,000 to \$15,000. The proposed reduction reflects that some members included in the original claim were either not eligible or did not submit the completed damages declaration by the deadline. We have not yet been given a release date for these funds.
 - The wind up of the BC Tree Fruit pension plan has begun, and the union has negotiated new terms for a group retirement savings plan. The BCFSA will oversee the wind up as the assigned plant administrator. Canada Life will continue to administer the group plan and provide employees with access to their accounts, account management tools, and investment performance information. Although this work was first expected to involve only minor changes, it became more complex as the parties worked through a number of important details. During discussions, there were attempts to remove language that protected members. The Union was able to preserve these protections along with current contribution levels. Although it took several months to finalize the agreement, the new plan gives members greater flexibility while continuing to offer secure investment options.
 - On September 18, 2025, BC Tree Fruit changed its name to Okanagan Growers Distribution Cooperative (OGDC). On May 30, 2026, the court conditionally approved a share purchase

transaction involving BC Tree Fruits Industries Limited. As part of that transaction, OGDC's assets and liabilities will be transferred to BCTFIL, and OGDC will no longer be the petitioner in the CCAA proceedings. OGDC and Acquireco will then amalgamate to form a new company, BC Tree Fruits Limited. While the process has taken longer than expected, the Union has worked hard to secure a strong outcome for members in a very difficult circumstance.

- We held a proposal conference for the Real Canadian Superstore which took place on April 8 to 10th with over 70 members across the province attending.
- The first day was a joint session for both retail and DC members and focused on education on how the benefit and pension plans worked through a presentation from Allison Thullner from PBAS. PBAS are the administrators for both the Local 247 Health and Welfare Plan and CCWIPP, the national pension plan. Chris Abbott, an economist working for our national office, then talked about the Loblaw company and their finances and standing within the retail food market. We then broke the retail and DCs into separate groups and debated, discussed, and, at time, argued a little bit over relevant and important issues.
- By the end, we had a much better understanding of what was important to members and what we should be targeting in the bargaining. We canvassed the delegates to gauge their level of involvement and interest and then subsequently picked a committee that represented a large number of stores, departments, and was diverse in its makeup.
- Remaining members now form a council that we invite in at the end of each bargaining session for a Teams chat so they can help get our message out. We have now met with the employer for two sessions of a week each. We have been primarily dealing with non-monetary or non-cost items and expect to get into scheduling issues next week. Your committee has been very clear with Loblaw and priorities, and it has been going well.
- Loblaw has made it clear that they're here to get a deal, but ultimately the wages and benefits offer will determine if we reach a settlement or simply wait until 2027. We've talked about this several times, but we wanted these negotiations to be more transparent with an emphasis on providing more and updated information as we meet.
- When we talk about money, although we have a number of important proposals that are cost of the company, our main focus is addressing the top rate and overscale members and dealing with minimum wage increases. On June 1st of this year, the minimum wage in BC will increase to \$18.25. If we did absolutely nothing to our scales, the first four steps would increase to that amount, and members would have to work 4,000 hours to see another increase. We need to not rely on fixes during the agreement every couple of years and look for a consistent result to this issue. This obviously increases the total cost, but all the members at the proposal conference agree this was the best solution we should be seeking.
- Regarding the June 1st minimum wage increase, because of Loblaw biweekly pay cycle, union colleagues impacted by the minimum wage will see new rates effective May 24th and then a deduction of the difference between the old rate and new rate for all hours paid from May 24th to May 31st. Colleagues may expect to see the deduction on their pay slip on June 11th. In short, this is a paper transaction, and no colleagues will be negatively impacted.

Eric Seto – Loblaw Report:

- DC 1935, pallet purity is currently live, and members were reporting major issues with errors, and we are continually reviewing this with management as routing issues have been identified. DC 1957 engineer audits have been completed, and management has returned to normal performance monitoring. DC 1957 is also starting phase 1 of pallet purity. The union engineers came in and audited DC 1957 and 35. And due to time constraints, we had requested two union engineers and two warehouse representatives, Johnny Khakh and Wojtek Rejewski, assisted in the audit. Some areas were identified as problematic, but overall aggregated assembly was within variance.
- During this audit, we discovered various slotting issues that were identified as problematic, and also, as well, standard operating procedures were not aligned with the engineer labor standards.

- The acceptable variance is plus or minus 5%, but our members are still reporting a drop of almost 10% in performance. We are now requesting that our engineers return to spend more time auditing the freezer at DC 1957. To sum up though, what we need is current SOPs, standard operating procedures, to be implemented and posted so everyone can read the correct standard operating procedures.
- At DC 1935, the audits also reviewed the flow area, and there is a systemic issue where the standard, included time to report, is zero residuals for multiple SKUs, but the system didn't allow it and was not triggering. It was also discovered that they were using newer forklifts, assembly forks, which had been evaluated and accounted for in the system. However, they're not activated for use, and so assemblers were using different machines at different speeds and signing in on the wrong machine. Because each fork speed is individually calculated for travel time, this has skewed the application of the engineer labor standards there. These forks have now been activated for proper use. In both DCs, containers appear validated within tolerance.
- we currently have two pending arbitrations. It seems like I've been talking about this for a long time. We had a termination for attendance management program for DC that was scheduled for June 1 to 5, that's next week. Labor relations approached us at the last minute to resolve the matter and indicated to us that they'll revisit the policy in the fall and invest more time to review their national policy in light of the BC employment standard differences on sick leave entitlements. They have had considerable time to review this policy with the union, but they've declined to engage with us in any meaningful conversations. However, I believe, based on the last interaction, the company recognizes there is a problem with how the policy has been applied, and they would rather review it than have an arbitrator find fault. This process can be frustrating, but litigation often takes a long time before a hearing is held.
- Terminations for alcohol and drug policy were scheduled for July 6 and 10. The company's legal counsel received our expert report on impairment and requested time to review it with their own experts. According to our counsel, this is encouraging, as it appears that Loblaws are prepared to move away from their standard of impairment under their policy. After both expert reports are reviewed, we expect that the company will respond with a change in their impairment policy.

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

6. **Secretary-Treasurer Report**

- Sartaj Birring, the union representative servicing Safeway stores in the lower mainland, is now on her maternity leave. Just before she went off, we had asked Kim Mantel, the shop steward at the McBride Safeway store, to come into the office to help as a temporary union representative to cover for Sartaj's maternity leave. Kim has already been an asset in the stores and has agreed for now to be with us until the end of the year.
- Notice was served to Sobeys to commence discussions under Letter of Understanding number 22 for the wage review in the contract. As this is strictly for wages and lump sums only, we will only be using a couple of our bargaining committee members from our earlier negotiations in 2023 for this process. Julie Ams from Safeway's Labor Relations Department has advised us that she will be the bargaining lead for the Safeway group for all three union bargaining tables. The employer has already booked dates with UFCW 1518. They have two days scheduled next week for June 1st and June 2nd. We are booking dates for our meeting for Monday, June 15th. I will have another quick discussion with Ronda Melbourne, the secretary treasurer for UFCW 1518 to make sure we are working together and not missing anything that either of us might propose on our side regarding wages and lump sums. We both hope to achieve those same increases with Safeway and secure the same wage improvements they secured with Save-On-Foods. We do have our own unique wage scale issues, and we will need to address those wage issues with Safeway when we meet.

- The kitchen commissary that opens has a rollout plan for the stores, and they started that rollout already in a couple of the Safeway stores and will be pushing forward with all the thrifty stores as well.
 - According to the information we received from the employer, the rollout plan spreads quickly to the other stores from there. The labor relations representatives still have not provided a full SKU of the items they will be producing other than sandwiches and flatbread to start with, as well as the kebab and hamburger kits already seen in the stores. We did hear about other possible SKUs like soups, Buddha bowls, and other non-produce store items like samosas. The cut fruit and vegetables produced in the store that impacts UFCW 1518 members is also supposed to roll out into the stores. We do not have any of those details at this time, as they indicated they have issues with some of the fruit items and their quality. The employer agreed to post full-time expression of interest positions for the commissary kitchen in the stores for both local unions. The union is aware that a few members from the stores may have applied for the commissary kitchen. Members who applied were told they will need to interview for these positions.
 - The Fleetwood Safeway store in Surrey will convert to a FreshCo store by the end of the year. The employer only announced it now in the store. Our collective agreement has a process in it for those members affected when the store converts, and we will just need to wait for more details if the employer does not have any dates for the conversion of the store to a FreshCo at this time. we will maintain communications with the union members in the store as more information becomes available. The store is still under the Safeway Collective Agreement, and it will continue to be represented and serviced as a Safeway until we have a date for conversion.
 - Safeway continues to open ZENSHI Sushi third-party kiosks in the stores, and we are hearing and seeing that they are taking over space in the delis that were once deli workspaces. We are looking into that, and we will be out in the stores to see exactly what is transpiring in each location as it does seem to be different in each store that they open them in.
 - We have heard about food safety issues and cross-contamination concerns. For any food safety or health and safety issues you see in these new areas, those issues need to be reported to your UFCW 247 health and safety worker representative in the store so that they can bring those concerns up in the health and safety meetings.
 - We had a termination grievance that was scheduled for arbitration in early June. That arbitration is now being canceled as the employer approached us for settlement. As we were able to reach a satisfactory settlement with the employer on behalf of the member, we have withdrawn and settled that arbitration.
 - We are updating the building landscape at the Surrey office to remove dead bushes and trees. The landscaping has not been updated or improved upon in more than 15 years. These changes are needed and will reduce the maintenance and cost of the landscaping.
- m / s / c to adopt the Secretary-Treasurer's report as read.

7. **Bargaining Report**

- Sobeys Campbell Heights Warehouse started bargaining in June of 2025. We bargained throughout the summer and fall. By October, we were unable to reach a deal that we would recommend to the membership, so the process there of an impasse in this agreement is to use final offer selection. We only had a few items and wages that we couldn't get the company to agree to. The theory behind final offer selection is that both sides put in an offer they believe reflects the current market conditions, and the arbitrator must choose one package as a whole, not parts of either, and combine them. After both sides put in their offers, the arbitrator selected the company's position. They decided that the union was too aggressive in reducing the pay scales. They were at 18,000 hours then reduced to 14,000 hours during the agreement to reach top rate.

We wanted it to reflect scales closer to their competitors are paying that are around 6,000 hours and get it down to 10,000 hours. We also wanted additional six days as the office staff in the warehouse received six days per year. We were close in wages, and we are confident we had an offer that reflected terms and rates of their competitors that we have in the local labor market. The arbitrator cited that this is the first agreement, and the company should not have to catch up so quickly, and the next negotiations may be a more appropriate time to achieve closer parity. The good news is that the company had put in more money and a shorter scale than they had offered at the table. We were disappointed with the decision, but we'll be looking for big gains in the next four and a half years when we go back to bargaining.

- We reached a settlement with FG Deli that the bargaining committee had recommended by 100%. We had a ratification on May 19th. The membership turned it down by wide margin. The company's current benefit plan has unlimited physiotherapy but caps on each massage therapy and chiropractic. The new package combined all three into one category, and only 2.4% of the people would exceed the current unlimited physiotherapy. The new benefit package would be better for 97.6%. We'd receive better benefits overall, so the committee chose that option. The new benefit package also had increases to glasses, eye exams, paramedical, and mental health services.
- Wage increases were big improvement for the last agreement. But in the current fiscal environment, it just wasn't enough. We've reached out to the company on next steps, but they have not decided yet to be a new offer or any changes to the last offer.
- We had a meeting with Loblaws Distribution Centre. We'd only exchanged proposals and talked briefly about the issues that each side has. We meet next June 2nd, the 9th, and the 16th to the 18th. The warehouse is to meet to discuss only warehouse issues. The retail committee bargains separately, but many items carry over in effective terms to the warehouse employees also. As always, if either committee doesn't feel like the offer is worth recommending, we won't be recommending a new deal. If either retail or the distribution center committee are not in agreement, no one will see a new collective bargaining agreement to vote on.
- We just ratified a new collective agreement at the No Frills in Fort St. John. Members were happy with the immediate and yearly increases to wages and the updated benefits packages. We'll be looking for similar deals soon in several locations that are at or near expiry. The next three locations are in Salmon Arm, Invermere, Hasting Street in Vancouver.

8. Engagement & Education Report

- Congratulations the six members who recently completed the level 1 portion of their meat-cutting apprenticeship program at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops. Our local is proud to support the meat-cutting trade through a scholarship fund available to members who already work in the meat department and want to pursue an official education in the trade. These six members from Safeway, Stong's Market, and your independent grocer are now back in their units preparing to take level 2 early next year.
- Last month, we had 14 members from across the province attend our introduction to stewardship course with one more being offered in the Okanagan in July.
- Regarding our engagement committee, with the extension of the current term, two of our members regrettably had to step down due to personal challenges, and now your committee is in the process of selecting dates for our summer barbecues with the intent of adding an educational component to all of them.
- We'll be hosting our annual pub night, which traditionally takes place in May, with the tentative new date near the end of September. This pub night is for the benefit of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of Canada. The Vancouver Pride Parade has been confirmed this year. It is scheduled for Sunday, August 2nd, and we will be joining the BC Federation of Labour Float on that day. In addition, we are planning to attend the Duncan Pride Festival on Sunday, June 21st.

Our participation in this event was initiated by one of our members at the Duncan Superstore, and we are happy to be able to support her request.

- Our local scholarship applications will be opening July 1st. There will be up to ten \$1,500 scholarship programs for full-time studies, and this will be available to members and their dependents, and we'll also offer up to eight \$750 grants for part-time studies, and these are for members only. UFCW Canada is also offering several \$1,000 scholarships for members and dependents who are enrolled in full-time studies. All these scholarships have an application deadline of September 30. More information is available on our website, ufcw247.com, under the Education tab.
- We're happy to announce that we are now ready to distribute the union membership pins that celebrate members who achieved 20 or 30 years or 40 years of union membership in 2025. If you are expecting to receive one, please keep an eye on your email for a notification reaching you soon. These pins recognize years of membership with UFCW and not years of service with your employer.

9. **Communications Report**

- Much of the focus of the last quarter has actually been on supporting the early bargaining process with Loblaw, so supporting our members at the Superstore locations and in the warehouses.
- We created, promoted, and analyzed bargaining surveys, and we had an excellent turnout and response rate from those surveys. That was a massive project and undertaking, and we felt it was very, very successful. Then we actually held nearly 100 open house-style events in stores and work locations throughout BC to let people know that bargaining was happening, and that also involved letting people know that those events were happening. So we communicated to members through things like bulletin boards, posters, and emails.
- A really big part of the quarter as well has been the bargaining conference that Dan mentioned in his report for 70-plus members of the bargaining team, so that would be the bargaining committee and bargaining council, where members who participated learned the ins and outs of the bargaining process and debated and discussed their priorities for bargaining. We felt that it was very educational and empowering and a really overall positive experience for the local.
- We created a bargaining page on our website for Superstore and DC members to quickly and easily access information about bargaining. We just kind of wanted to put it out there. We've posted the latest bargaining updates, a number of frequently asked questions around, "When are the wage increases coming?" priorities that the bargaining committee has set, and as well a lot of key information about why early bargaining is important.
- Aside from the bargaining page, we also created email and printed updates for each week of bargaining. These updates are developed with and by the bargaining committee at the end of each week of bargaining that we do, and we're getting that out right away through engagement activities, like fan-outs, but we're also posting that stuff on the website and sending it out to people by email.
- Finally, in relation to the Loblaw early bargaining project, we're working feverishly in advance of a possible upcoming ratification process. We want to make sure that the results of the bargaining happen quickly and effectively and that the information is getting to members and that members are able to make their decision on whether to accept the results of that negotiations process. Of note, I just wanted to put out there and make sure everyone is aware we are planning to vote a tentative agreement using a secure online voting system, and so this is a new development. We have used online voting before on a much smaller scale, but this would be the largest group that we'd be using it with.
- We've also continued to support FG Deli negotiations that Dean mentioned by providing bargaining updates in a similar way to our superstore updates, so by print, email, and we've also

posted videos on our website from the bargaining committee throughout the bargaining process. We provided an abbreviated summary of their recent tentative agreement that we got quickly translated into Filipino and Punjabi.

- I do want to focus in a little bit on one aspect of the communications work that we've been doing before concluding my report, and that is the topic of emails. The key thing when it comes to emails is to make sure that we have your correct email address, and by the correct email address what we mean is the email address that you mostly check. So we know that sometimes people have different email addresses but just make sure that we have your correct email address, and the best way to do that is to go to our website. If you go to ufcw247.com, you go straight to the homepage, and there's actually a popup, and that'll prompt you to update your contact information. And if you fill that out, that will immediately get us on updating your email address in our system.
- I did want to flag for you as well that sometimes folks are using email addresses that are provided to them from their employer, for example, loblaw.ca email address. You don't want to use a loblaw.ca email address, especially for stuff that is union business and for stuff that's related to union stuff. Your personal email address is really what's important.

10. **New Business**

- No new business.

Q&A PERIOD – 5 questions were asked & answered.

11. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:57 pm.

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