

SEPTEMBER
2020



THE MEMBERS' VOICE

THE NEWSLETTER OF CUPE LOCAL 15, VANCOUVER MUNICIPAL EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY WORKERS
We are on the unceded Coast Salish Territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh)

Please note!

The union office continues to be open to essential staff only and closed to members, executive, and other visitors. Union business is being conducted by telephone, email, video conferencing, or conference calls, and outside the office when necessary.

Office telephone hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

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GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

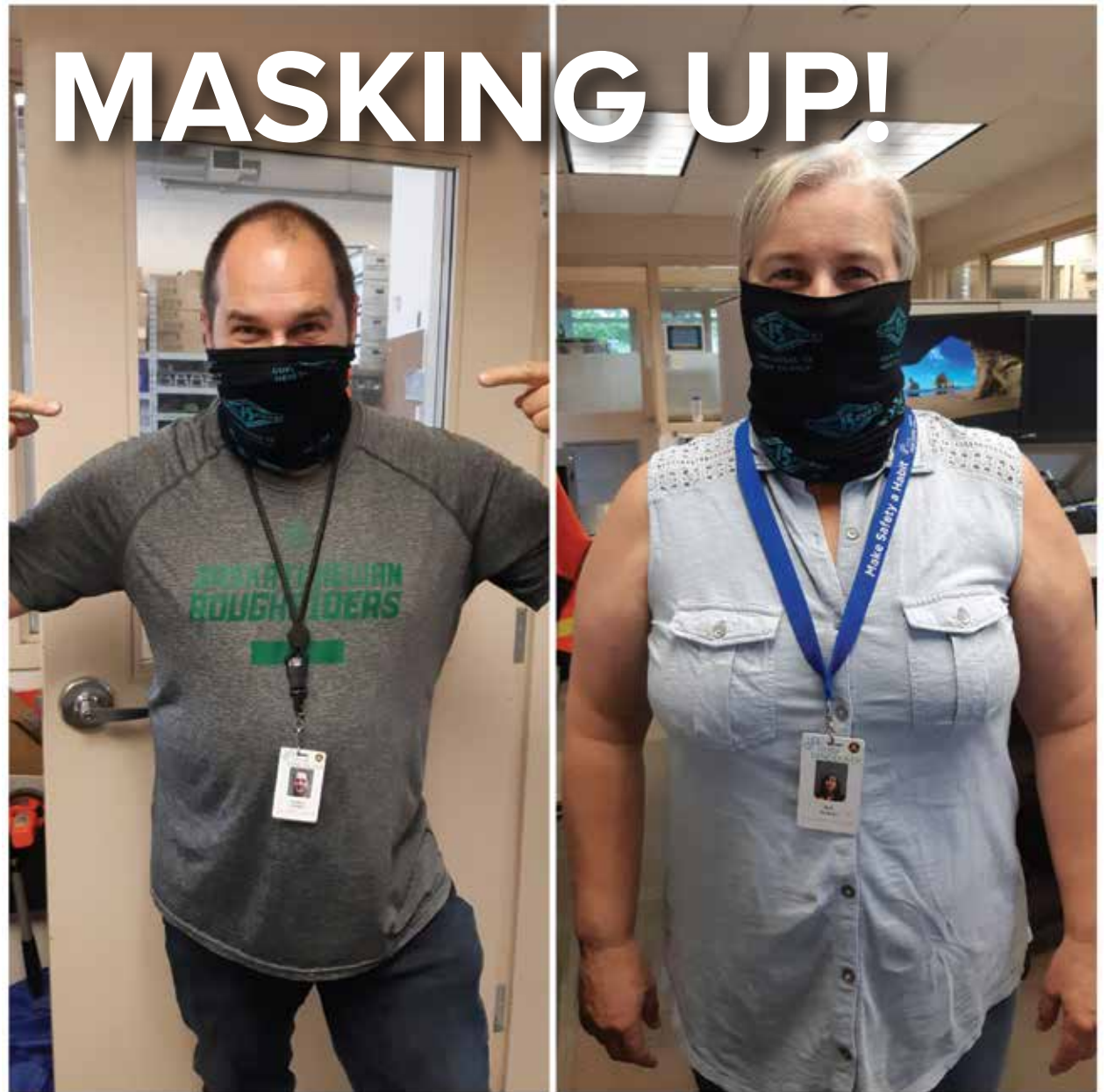
A virtual General Membership meeting will be held on September 23, 2020 via Zoom. You will be sent an invitation via email if the union office has a personal email address on file for you.

Details will also be posted at www.cupe15.org. If you do not receive emails from the union office please call us at 604-879-4671 to update your information or email us at email@cupel5.org.

Under Discussion:

- By-elections for HSSCBA Sector Representative and Cultural Sector Representative
- Bylaw Amendment – Section 5
- Financial Statement
- Committee and Staff Reports

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:
CUPE Local 15
545 W. 10th Ave.
Vancouver, BC
V5Z 1K9



A big thank you from Georgie and Susie, in Parking Operations to CUPE Local 15 for the gear and to 1st VP Santino Scardillo for delivering it to us at our worksite.

CALL FOR INTEREST

CUPE Local 15 OH&S Committee

The CUPE Local 15 OH&S Committee is putting out a call for interest for the following OH&S positions on the committee:

- Health Sector Representative and Alternate Representative
- City Sector Alternate Representative
- Cultural /Museum Alternate Representative

If you are interested please submit your name, worksite, OH&S qualifications, and experience in writing to the committee chair, Henry Lee via email to henryleecupe15@gmail.com by September 30, 2020.

OH&SC Mission Statement

To promote and increase the profile of worker health and safety through direct contact with workplace health and safety committees and members, through site visits, education, providing resources and guidance across all CUPE Local 15 sectors.

For more information about the work of the committee and the **Terms of Reference** please go to cupel5.org and click on the OH&S tab on the home page.



Welcome back to a different kind of Fall

by Warren Williams, President



WARREN WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT

Hello Members,

With school start up I am sure many of you have concerns for your families returning to school and their health and safety. It is important that we all follow the advice of Doctor Bonnie Henry and Minister of Health

Adrian Dix. Wash our hands regularly, wear a mask when we are unable to physical distance, stay home if we are not well, and don't have or attend large social gatherings.

When you are thinking about school and your children's safety I want you to know that all school districts have mandatory requirements for a safety plan that must be approved by the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, the Provincial Health Office, and in consultation

with the union. Safety plans can be found on the district websites.

I also want you to be confident with the knowledge that it is support staff unions such as CUPE, the IUOE, and the BCGEU custodial members who are doing all the deep cleaning and sanitizing of all schools as your children's health and safety is the number one priority. Please also be assured our members that are education assistants and office support are also on site not only to support your child's educational success but also to monitor their health and safety.

Whether you are member working in a Vancouver School Board, Park Board, City, College, University, Health, or Cultural facility or worksite, or at Ray-Cam or Britannia, your operational health and safety site committees are there to ensure your safety, not only during the pandemic but at all times. Check your employer's website regularly to familiarize yourself with your site safety protocols. If you

have questions contact your CUPE 15 onsite health and safety representative.

Congratulations to our members at Langara College and Emily Carr University and their bargaining committees for the successful ratification of their recently negotiated collective agreements. The committees and members had to navigate new challenges to complete the bargaining and ratification processes during the pandemic.

City, Parks, Ray-Cam, and Britannia collective bargaining is our next priority and we have recently reached out to the employer to continue with the negotiations.

This has been a difficult six months and there are more challenges ahead. Our office continues to be open to only essential personnel and I want to thank you all for your patience during this time, and for the work you do for the citizens of Vancouver.

September is Steward Appreciation Month

by Debbie Mohabir, Secretary-Treasurer

As we head into September many of our members are being called back to work, returning from the summer break, are still laid off. There has been much



DEBBIE MOHABIR
SECRETARY-TREASURER

uncertainty since March and the constantly changing information about the COVID-19 pandemic has been stressful for everyone. The impact on all has been great.

Local 15 has been working hard to seek clarity and advocate

on many issues that affect our members with our 17 employers, and we will continue to do so as we navigate the fall season and new challenges. I would like to say thank you to all of the members who have reached out to their sector's stewards to keep them apprised of the many difficulties they have faced at their worksites; it has helped greatly and I encourage you to continue to reach out.

September is Steward Appreciation Month Stewards play an integral role in any union and are the backbones that support members, speak up on behalf of members, fight for fair working conditions and bargain collective agreements, amongst many other things. For a large labour union like CUPE Local 15 with

over 7,900 members and 17 employers, the work that stewards do is vital. Representing members in meetings with employers, filing grievances, making sure workplaces are safe, working to accommodate members, holding employers accountable, conducting investigations, being a union voice on committees and continually upgrading their knowledge through education, are just some of the examples of the many things our amazing stewards do.

Stewards are also the conduit between members in their sector and the Executive Board. Information on "the going ons" assist the Executive in making decisions and advocating at the higher levels politically.

Once you have attended the Intro to Stewarding course we offer and become a steward you will be invited to monthly steward meetings. These meetings allow stewards to connect with each other and to discuss relevant information that they should be aware of amongst many other things. Don't worry, you won't have to figure it out on your own. Each sector has an amazing group of knowledgeable stewards to help mentor and guide those who are new.

Being a steward for 13 years and the Chief Steward for the K-12 Sector for the past four years before being elected as the Secretary-Treasurer, I can honestly say that it has been a very rewarding experience to help members through difficulties and to help make things better for workers. I have sat on Standing committees with Trustees, Advisory committees and many joint committees at the Vancouver

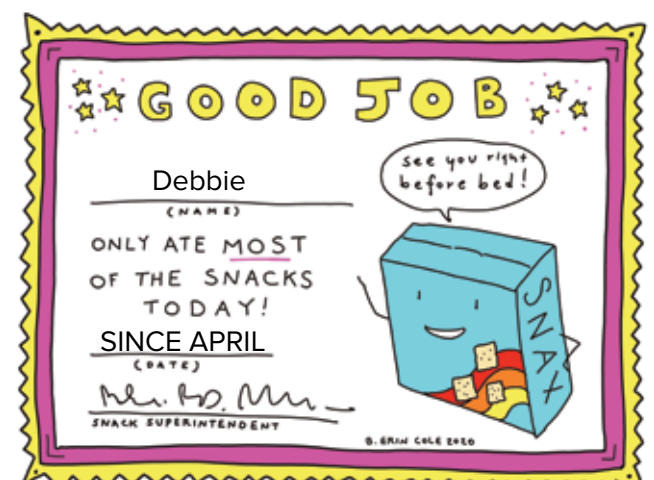
School Board to make sure that our members' voices and concerns are always heard.

We are quite disappointed to not be able to have our Annual Steward Appreciation Dinner this year due to COVID-19 but when we are able to, we will. This is a small token to say thank you to our stewards for all of the hard work that is done on behalf of members, and to their families for the time they are away from them.

Do you want to become a steward? We would love to have you! Please contact the union office for more information on how to get the process started. I would also be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

On behalf of the Executive, we would like to extend our appreciation and gratitude to all of the stewards for the amazing work you do for the members every day and especially during the pandemic. You are all the real MVPs!

(PS, here's a little COVID humour needed in these times.)



Donation Thanks

Thank you so much for the recent gift of \$1,000, and for joining us in the fight to protect and expand human rights and civil liberties in Canada.

As a supporter of the BCCLA, you ensure that we can continue to preserve, defend, maintain and extend civil liberties in Canada. We would not exist without you.

In the coming months we'll continue to roll out our Policing Indigenous Communities Initiative; we'll work to hold our government and its spy agencies accountable; and we'll push to ensure government overreach doesn't go unchecked, that privacy rights are respected, and that the most marginalized are not left behind in the government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This work is only possible because of your support. Thank you for standing with us.

Truthfully, we could not do this without you. We deeply appreciate your generosity.

In gratitude,

Sambriddhi Nepal
BC Civil Liberties Association

BYLAW AMENDMENT: SECTION 5 Associate Membership

At the February 26, 2020 General Membership meeting the members voted unanimously to amend Section 5 of the bylaws as per the recommendation from the Executive Board. Subsequently, CUPE National did not approve the amendment and instead indicated approval would be forthcoming with the following revisions: (strike out denotes deleted language and bold denotes new language).

Section 5: Associate Membership Honourary Lifetime Members

~~Any member who ceases to be an employee within the jurisdiction of CUPE Local 15 may apply for Associate Membership based on the following:~~

5.1.1 ~~An Associate Member will have voice but not vote at Local meetings.~~

5.1.2 ~~Applications must be approved by the membership, subject to review annually.~~

5.1.3 ~~Associate Membership will be conditional on dues, which will be set by the General Membership at the Annual General Meeting, being paid.~~

5.1.4 ~~An Associate Member will not be eligible to hold office in CUPE Local 15.~~

Honourary lifetime membership will be approved as per Article B.10.1(a) of the National Constitution.

FYI - Article B.10.1(a) of the National Constitution states:

"A member who has reached retirement age or is unable to work can apply to the Secretary-Treasurer of the Local Union for an honorary retiring card when they leave employment. If the member is in good standing, members of the Local Union will vote on the application at a regular membership meeting. If a majority of members vote in favour of the application, the Secretary-Treasurer will send the name and address of the retiring member to the National Secretary-Treasurer who will issue the Retiring Card."

VSB JOB SHARE OPPORTUNITY

I am an SSA at John Norquay Elementary School and am looking for someone job share with starting immediately. I'd like to work on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays, and for my job share partner to work Thursdays and Fridays. Please email me Sheila Farrales if you are interested at sheilafarrales3@gmail.com.

decisions

The Executive decided

At the Executive and Society meetings on June 16, July 21, July 30, and August 18 the following decisions were made:

- To approve the ratification of the Emily Carr University of Art and Design Memorandum of Agreement.
- To donate \$1,000 to the Carnegie Indigenous Peoples Day Celebration.
- To send a thank you basket to CUPE Local 4227 for the use of their webinar platform for the May 2020 General Membership Meeting.
- To approve distribution of an OH&S Committee introduction letter.
- To appoint Sotelo Apdian as an alternate OH&S Representative to the Stanley Park Service Yard OH&S Committee.
- To appoint Cynthia Schadt as the Interim Chief Shop Steward for the Vancouver School Board.
- To approve a parting gift for the past Secretary-Treasurer up to the maximum amount as per policy.
- To approve the appointments of Cynthia Schadt and Noel Graves as Temporary Staff Representative to provide vacation relief.
- To uphold the President's decision regarding provision of election results.
- To approve the ratification of the Langara College Memorandum of Agreement.
- To appoint Mahyar Khalilipour as an alternate to the Parks Joint OH&S Committee.
- To donate \$150 to Rabble.ca for labour reporting.
- To donate \$1,000 to the United Way Local Food Hubs.
- To approve the amended terms of reference for the CUPE Local 15 OH&S Committee.
- To uphold the decision of the Grievance Committee regarding a grievance in the Health Sector.
- To donate \$1,000 for the Hope in Shadows Sponsorship.
- To approve a settlement agreement between the City of Vancouver and CUPE Local 15 regarding a grievance in the City sector.
- To seek three quotes to repair/repave the union office parking lot.

Notice of By-election

1. **Member at Large – HSSCBA Sector Representative (Community Health)**
This is for the balance of a three year term ending May 25, 2022. Only members from the HSSCBA Sector are eligible to be nominated or to vote.
2. **Member at Large – Cultural Sector Representative**
This is for the balance of a three year term ending May 25, 2022. Only members from the Cultural Sector are eligible to be nominated or to vote.

IN THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19,

WHETHER YOU'RE ON THE FRONTLINES

OR DELIVERING VITAL PUBLIC SERVICES

OR AT HOME FLATTENING THE CURVE

WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER



Paul Faoro, President, Trevor Davies, Secretary-Treasurer
CUPE.BC.CA

CUPE BC



The Members' Voice is published nine times a year for members of CUPE Local 15 - Vancouver Municipal, Education and Community Workers. The deadline for submissions is 9:00 a.m. on the first Wednesday of each month. All submissions may be edited for brevity and clarity. Signed articles and letters do not necessarily reflect the views or policy of CUPE Local 15.

CUPE Local 15

545 West 10th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5Z 1K9
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Web: www.cupe15.org

Local 15 is a chartered affiliate of the Canadian Union of Public Employees and is also affiliated with the CUPE British Columbia Division, CUPE Metro District Council, the Vancouver & District Labour Council, and the BC Federation of Labour. CUPE 15 is a member of the Canadian Association of Labour Media (CALM).

CUPE Local 15 Executive Board Table Officers:

President: Warren Williams
Secretary-Treasurer: Debbie Mohabir
1st Vice President: Santino Scardillo
2nd Vice President: Gaye Fowler

Sector Representatives:

City: Kamal Gautam, Ravina Lal
College/University: Alex Fowler, Rose Palozzi
Cultural: Vacant
Health/HSSCBA: Vacant
Health/HSPBA: Mia Nickel
Parks: Kyle Larson, Starla Bayley
K-12: Carley Romas, Cynthia Schadt

Trustees:

Donna Petersen, Michele Alexander, Aaron Cook

Staff Representatives:

Kathie Currie, John Geppert, Steve Salsman, Gail Johnson, Joy Tullos

Office & Administrative Staff:

Mark Gloumeau, Accounting Coordinator
Rosemary Matheson, Office Manager
Barbara Simpson, Office Assistant
Nadia Thibault, Office Assistant
Nancy Strider, Accounting Assistant
Tia Tang, Office Assistant

Building Service Worker:

Elaine Duan

CUPE National Representatives:

Chris Losito, Patrick Barbosa

The CUPE Local 15 office is very old and unfortunately not accessible. For our members with mobility challenges please note that the office is on the 3rd floor and there is no elevator. If you are attending an appointment or meeting with one of our staff, please contact them in advance to make alternate arrangements for the meeting place or call the Secretary-Treasurer at 604-879-4671.

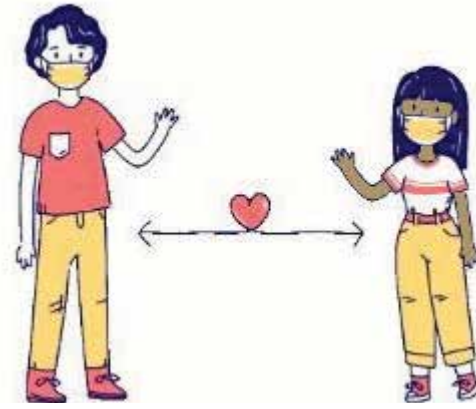
We sincerely apologize and want you to know we are working very hard to rectify the accessibility issues with our building.

Solidarity during a pandemic

by Steve Salsman, Staff Representative

It is now well known that, in early in March, the City of Vancouver including the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation and the Vancouver Public Library (the employers) met with CUPE Locals 15 (City and Parks), 1004 (outside workers), and 391 (library workers) in response to the Coronavirus pandemic. The news was bleak. Operations were being shut down in compliance with orders from the Public Health Authority and a state of emergency was declared. We were advised that all non-essential service workers were being told to stay home and that layoffs would be in the hundreds if not the thousands of our collective members.

Shortly thereafter the employers called separate meetings with each of the CUPE locals for a similar purpose. The various collective agreements covered by each local were never negotiated in such a way to address this situation. Working from home or telecommuting was not even contemplated in at least one of these agreements and in none of the agreements were massive temporary layoffs contemplated. Most had been negotiated to address permanent layoffs which result in the activation of bumping rights. The employers, in each of the separate meetings, were seeking the assistance of the union in avoiding what would surely result in chaos if hundreds upon hundreds of employees were to begin bumping one another. Bumping is not temporary and would most certainly result in permanent layoffs for many members. The employers were meeting with the locals separately to seek an agreement around bumping.



This initial conversation did not go well. The offer would do little to ease the pain of layoffs our members were facing, and each local left their meeting determined to do better but with no real clear path forward on how to achieve this.

We admitted to ourselves that we were scared and quite rightly worried about the future of our members. This is where the story of solidarity starts. Much like the global pandemic, something happened on a scale that had not happened in recent memory. That afternoon, the afternoon of March 18th, the three CUPE Locals met at the Local 15 office. The meeting was unplanned. The President and staff of CUPE Local 1004 were looking for a space to meet to discuss next steps. The President and staff of CUPE Local 15 soon joined the meeting, and before long the President of CUPE Local 391 was called and asked to participate in what now looked like a chance to work together. A caucus of what would come to be affectionately known as "The Troika" (the three Locals) was now underway and this was a good thing.

Soon thereafter the leadership and staff of the three locals, along with staff from CUPE National, called the employers and requested a meeting. At that meeting we laid out what we saw as a plan forward which the employers took away to contemplate. The very next day, a Friday, we were advised by the employers that many of our members would be told not to report to work the following Monday. The locals were not impressed; there was no plan in place that would protect our members or notice of the impending layoffs and loss of income. This at a time when everyone was attempting to come to grips with a global pandemic both at work and at home. The locals demanded a meeting and were determined to find a solution over the coming weekend.

The three CUPE Locals and three employers came together at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 21st and, for the next 18 straight hours, negotiated a workforce adjustment plan by way of a Letter of Understanding which was later ratified by the Executive Boards of the three locals. This is now referred to as the "Framework Agreement", a broad document covering all three employers and locals spanning five collective agreements. Both Britannia and Ray-Cam later adopted a similar document for a total of five employers and seven collective agreements.

The Framework provided layoff notice in the form of pay protection, access to benefits, job security for those who were on layoff, and recall procedures among other things. Just as important, in particular to auxiliary and casual staff covered by the agreement (nearly 900 in City and Parks alone), seniority would be protected for the duration of the public health crisis and at least three months beyond.

In the following weeks and months the locals have continued to work together with the employers on issues flowing from the Framework and other emergent issues including continued access to

benefits for regularized employees, clarification of recall procedures and access to recall for auxiliary and casual staff, reduced hours of work agreements for members facing challenges such as child care, access to sick leave, priority notification with regard to job opportunities to those on layoff, etc. Most notably, the locals were able to work with senior management at the City of Vancouver in an effort

to stave off hundreds of additional layoffs arising from budget issues faced by the employers.

It has been a tremendous amount of work and there is still much to do. While at the time of writing this article, the majority of CUPE 15 regularized staff (with the exception of Vancouver Civic Theatres) have been recalled to work in some capacity, it is not over yet. We are a long way from returning to what we used to refer to as "normal" and the three locals continue to act in solidarity. The only way to make it through difficult times is to stick together and to support each other as best we can. Solidarity is the key that opens a doorway through, and eventually out of, a tough situation.

We owe thanks to the Presidents and Executive Boards of CUPE Locals 15, 1004, and 391 along with their Staff Representatives and CUPE National Representatives, all of whom have worked tirelessly in an effort to minimize the impacts to our members in the early days of this pandemic and on an ongoing basis. It is equally important to recognize the senior leadership at the City of Vancouver and Vancouver Public Library along with their Labour Relations staff who have also worked very hard with the locals over the many days, evenings, and weekends that have been required to find solutions.

And finally, to all members both working and not working, while we were able to hold Shop Steward meetings for those able to attend, it has not been easy to update you in a timely and accurate fashion over the past months. We thank you for your patience and for all of your hard work during this most difficult time. We look forward to seeing you all safely back to work as soon as can be managed.