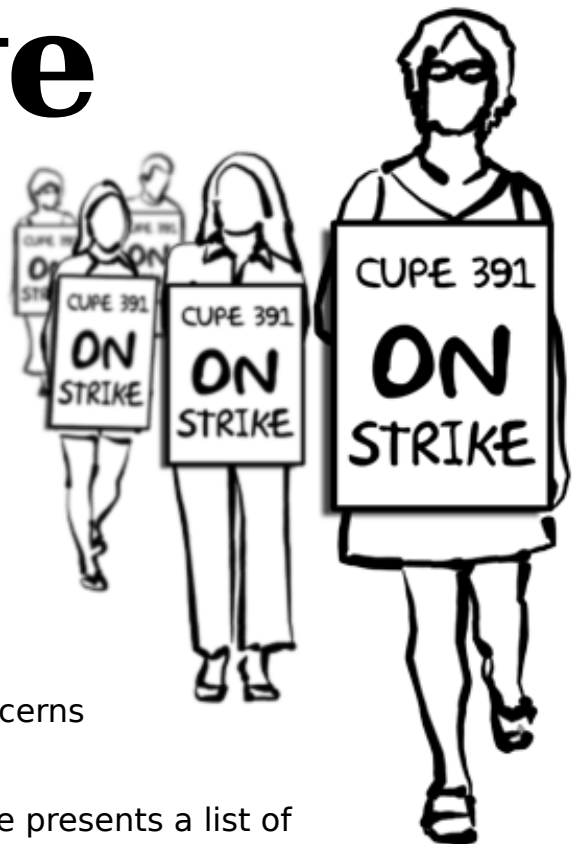


How did we get here?



Chronology

Summer/Fall 2006 – CUPE 391's Bargaining Committee is appointed and begins preparations for upcoming negotiations.

Summer 2006 – The CUPE 391 Bargaining Committee surveys members on what issues and concerns they would like to see addressed in our next contract.

October 2006 – The CUPE 391 Bargaining Committee presents a list of proposed bargaining issues to the 391 Executive. The issues are amended and ratified by the executive and presented to 391 members at the *November 22, 2006* General Meeting.

CUPE 391's contract with our Employer is set to expire on *December 31, 2006*. It's time to bargaining a new contract.

December 18, 2006 – Negotiations begin.

The CUPE 391 Bargaining Committee has its first meeting with the Employer and the GVRD to exchange proposals.

January-April 2007 – Negotiations continue.

CUPE 391 meet with the Employer on *January 31, February 26 & April 11*, with no progress. Municipal workers from CUPE 15 (Vancouver inside), 1004 (Vancouver outside,) 23 (Burnaby), 454 (Delta), and North Vancouver District (389) bargain with the GVRD and their respective employers and also make no meaningful progress.

April 26, 2007 – CUPE 15 receives 93.5% support for a strike. CUPE 391 has made no further progress in negotiations.

Wednesday, June 6, 2007 – CUPE 391's Bargaining Committee meets again with the Employer. The Employer continues to say no to all of 391's proposals. Talks come to a complete halt.

Thursday, June 7, 2007 – CUPE 391 applies for mediation at the Labour Relations Board in an effort to negotiate a fair collective agreement.

Wednesday, June 13, 2007 – Fairness to Civic Workers Campaign is launched. www.fairnessforcivicworkers.ca

Sunday, June 24, 2007 – CUPE 391 members take strike vote.

There is a large membership turnout for the Strike Vote meeting. (A strike vote is a referendum that gives the Union the legal ability to take strike action, if necessary, in support of negotiating a collective agreement.) CUPE 391 members vote 97% in favour of strike action if the Employer continues to ignore our proposals.

Tuesday, July 3, 2007 – Mediation begins.

CUPE 391 Bargaining Committee meets with the mediator for the first time and presents an amended package to The Employer.

Thursday, July 5, 2007 – CUPE staff release a report on Pay Equity (one of our four key issues) and its impact on libraries. Copies are distributed to worksites.

Bargaining Committee members Ed Dickson, and Laura Safarian join more than 50 CUPE members from around the Lower Mainland at the GVRD Labour Relations Bureau's monthly meeting. CUPE had previously made an application to be put on the speakers list, but were told that "labour relations" was not on the agenda. Despite being asked to leave, CUPE members stand their ground and reluctantly the GVRD allows CUPE BC President Barry O'Neill a chance to speak to the Labour Relations Bureau for no more than 10 minutes. During his short address, President O'Neill reminds the GVRD that no meaningful bargaining has actually occurred yet. There is extensive media coverage of this meeting.

Wednesday, July 11, 2007 – Back in mediation.

The CUPE 391 Bargaining Committee tables another amended list of proposals on several issues. The Employer responds to the Union, but so far none of CUPE 391 priority issues, like Pay Equity, Job Security, Rights for Part-Time and Auxiliary Employees, or benefits have been addressed.

Friday, July 20, 2007 – Mediation Unsuccessful, Strike Notice Issued.

After three days in mediation, the Employer continues to stall and refuses to discuss any of 391's key issues. With no other options available, at 4 p.m. the Bargaining Committee asks the Mediator to book out and serves 72-hour strike notice. However, the Committee also encourages and invites the Employer to continue talking over the weekend in hopes of coming to an agreement. Unfortunately, the Employer emphatically declines to continue negotiating and leaves the room.

July 25, 2007 – CUPE 391 makes a presentation to the VPL Board on Pay Equity and reissues invitation to bargain.

July 26, 2007 – CUPE 391 members go on strike for the first time in our local's 77-year history.

The Bargaining committee again reissues an invitation to the Employer to meet anytime and anywhere to bargain a fair agreement without concessions that addresses our local and key issues. Negotiations in the City of Richmond conclude and the collective agreement is ratified (formally approved)

Wednesday, August 1, 2007 – Negotiations Resume.

The Bargaining Committee tables an amended package of proposals that featured our local key issues. The Employer takes the package and says they will get back to us on *August 9*. They intend for us to wait over a week for their response knowing that we would be remain on strike.

CUPE 454 and Corporation of Delta ratified their agreement *August 1*.

Thursday, August 2, 2007 – Burnaby contact is ratified. The Burnaby Library Board and Union will form a joint committee to look at all library classifications (except pages), comparing them to similar positions in the City of Burnaby, and then making use of the job evaluation plan being developed by Coquitlam and the GVRD

Saturday, August 4, 2007 – North Vancouver District contracts are ratified.

Although they did not ask for a job evaluation plan, North Van librarians receive a 1 page grade wage adjustment.

Sunday, August 5, 2007 – Vancouver CUPE locals (391, 1004, 15) agree to resume negotiations with the City. A media blackout is imposed, which lasts for 5 days.

Tuesday, August 7, 2007 – Surrey contract is ratified.

Thursday, August 9, 2007 – Negotiations break off. Media black-out is lifted.

The Bargaining Committee, after being available for a total of over sixty-four hours, meets with the Employer for only three hours and five minutes. The Committee tries to be creative and flexible with our proposals, but the Employer will not seriously consider any of 391's local issues and continues to focus on Employer concessions.

Wednesday, August 15, 2007 – The Bargaining Committee meets again with the Employer.

The Employer basically restates their last position and offers less than the regional wage settlement that has wage increases on *January 1st* of each year.

Friday, August 17, 2007 – The Bargaining Committee responds to the Employer with a counter proposal.

We include the actual wage and term from the other regional settlements and job evaluation language from ratified Burnaby agreement.

Today - We are still waiting to hear back from our Employer.

What will happen next?

CUPE 391 members will continue to be strong and share our support and ideas on the picket line, from home and at our offices. In this review, it should be noted the number of times the word “amended” was used in relation to CUPE 391’s proposals. Our bargaining team has been tweaking and adjusting our proposal in good faith that our Employer will do the same. That is how fair bargaining works.

FAQs

(Q) What are our key issues again?

(A) We have four key issues:

- ➔ Pay Equity
- ➔ Improved benefits for our members and their families
- ➔ Rights for Part-Time and Auxiliary workers
- ➔ Better job security and tech change protection

(Q) I missed the strike vote meeting and although I agree with most of our issues I am not sure about some, especially now that I have been on strike for a few weeks. Can we vote again on which issues are most important to us?

(A) No. Our issues were tabulated based on a member-wide survey, after which point a ratification meeting was held to endorse our bargaining proposals. This was reaffirmed with a 97% strike vote during bargaining. Current hardship may weaken some member’s resolve, but we cannot afford to have our strike mean nothing by accepting a deal that does not address the issues that are most important to us. We will have to live with what we accept for at least five years.

(Q) How many people would pay equity actually affect directly? I heard it’s just librarians, what about LA 1’s?

(A) What we are proposing is the first small step in achieving pay equity at VPL. Part of what we are proposing is that ALL library jobs be analyzed through a gender neutral point weighted job evaluation plan. In other jurisdictions most library positions have seen wage increases.

(Q) I heard in the news that our Employer wants to introduce a new job of shelvers or “pages”. I never heard of them before. What do they do? Isn’t it better to have more members in our bargaining unit, even if they get paid less?

(A) Pages are usually high school students who only shelve books. We anticipate that Pages would replace our existing LA 1s.

(Q) Who are the Bargaining Committee and how are they appointed? How did they get this job?

(A) The VPL Bargaining Committee is a committee of six members, four are appointed by the Executive, plus the President and a Vice President. The function of the committee is to prepare collective bargaining proposals and to negotiate the collective agreement between the VPL Board and the VPL bargaining unit. The term of office of the appointed members ends at the conclusion of collective bargaining.

(Q) What happens if the membership is unhappy with the work of the Bargaining Committee or a proposed settlement? Can we get another negotiator for us?

(A) If the membership rejects the offer for settlement negotiated and recommended by our bargaining team (i.e. our members vote to not ratify the deal), the Bargaining Committee can take one of two actions:

1. The Bargaining Committee may choose to resign and a new Committee would be appointed by the Executive.
2. The Bargaining Committee could take new directions from the membership at the ratification meeting and return to the bargaining table to continue to negotiate.

CUPE is in the business of negotiating collective agreements. They have a 99.6% success rate (avoiding strikes). They are the best bargainers in the business - we can't get any better.