

Job Action Committee Meeting August 30, 2007

Present: D'Arcy, Brian, Todd, Gillian (and Merlin), Pat, Gordon, Cynthia, Nita, Rita, Anne

Pickets

- Running well at all locations
- Peter will be back on Wednesday but will be working on other committees as well so picket captains are asked to continue to step up and carry out daily tasks on the picket lines

Media

- We continue to distribute a daily hotsheet
- Engage with the public and talk to them about misinformation that may be printed in the media
- We do not want negative media coverage
- Remember the majority of the public is still on our side right now
- Circulate the information sheets we have now
- Point out that we tell the truth and we just want a fair deal like the one Burnaby got
- We don't lie, we don't engage in spin or propaganda and we don't "negotiate" through the media or ads
- Stay loyal to each other, keep talking to and supporting each other, and find out from our members what is really going on if letters, comments, etc. end up in the media
- We are moving forward together
- We still want to encourage and support grassroots initiatives in a positive way
- Be advocates and be supportive even if something goes wrong or gets a negative spin
- Our members are agitated because nothing is happening, but nothing is happening because our employer is refusing to respond and negotiate (now day 13 waiting for a response from our employer)

CUPE 15 / 1004

- Some concern has been expressed that we are portraying ourselves as the "cultural elite" compared to CUPE 15 and 1004
- It is something the media has focussed on
- CUPE 15 and 1004 are looking at trying new ideas on their picket lines in response
- We could consider having more collaboration and guest pickets with CUPE 15 and 1004

- We need to make our voice heard and we are not getting as much media attention as 15 or 1004
- Remember these other locals are demoralized and depressed and for many of them this is not their first time on strike
- They have been down this road before and it has not always been happy or worked out well for them

Roundtable

- The Hardship Committee has decided not to give out any more grants but they will still be giving interest-free loans. Some clarification around this will be posted and distributed – picket captains make sure the word gets out as well. The Hardship Committee HAS NOT run out of money. The committee members were concerned about the judicious use of the money in the fund. Food and faresavers are also still available. Interest free loans will need to be paid back by the end of the fiscal year (May 2008). Payment plans can be set up at the time the loan is given.
- Remember no one will be left behind. We will not allow our members to lose their house, go hungry or anything like that. CUPE National can also provide interest-free loans to our local to deal with hardship if that were necessary. Reassure our members that there are still funds and the changes are to do with the way the money is distributed not that there is no money left.
- Remember to ask questions, read blog updates (which are printed out and available at all permanent picket sites, for those who do not have computer access), attend crew talks, talk to other picket captains – stay informed!
- Job Action coordinators are visiting all branches with pickets on a regular basis to answer questions, etc.
- People are getting tired, cutting back picketing hours, etc. but everyone is still supportive and resolved. They do not want to give up.
- A reminder that members can get prorated strike pay if they are unable to do 20 hours in a week, but 20 hours will still be required for coverage of benefits. 20 hours is still the minimum expected but people do have extenuating circumstances that sometimes limit their ability to do 20 hours.
- Sick time, etc. should be noted on your weekly job action record
- It is important to have the Bargaining Committee continue to meet with us on the lines as often as possible. Talking with us about the issues is very important and much appreciated
- Talking about our issues sparks productive conversations amongst the membership as we clarify and debate our issues

- Remember bargaining involves negotiation and some things will be conceded
- Encourage people to join committees and get involved
- A suggestion was made to have informal discussion groups or EAP counsellors on the lines to ensure people are feeling OK
- Remember to foster and support grassroots ideas and activities
- Encourage the positive
- On Saturday, September 8th there will be a benefit concert at the Maritime Labour Centre to raise money for the Hardship Fund. Three or four bands are being lined up
- The recent Board Meeting was for information only. Board members arrived and had to pick up picket passes from the registration desk. The majority came up to get passes. Alex also handed out the "My civil city has pay equity" buttons. Picketers who were on the line at the time stood in "silent witness." Joan Anderson was out of town.
- Frustration and boredom is building among our members but most are still positive and committed
- Remember to gently educate members regarding behaviour on the pickets
- Central is still difficult to cover in the evenings and numbers drop significantly for most shifts towards the end of the week and on the weekends

Meeting adjourned at 11:00am