

Report of 1st Vice President

OPSEU CAAT-A Local 653 2021-2022

General Membership Meeting of OPSEU CAAT-A Local 653

May 13, 2022

Overall, there are items/issues that have come up:

- There was organizational and reporting work undertaken with regards to demand setting, the strike vote, bargaining and strike preparations
- At the start of the academic year, there were multiple members of the LEC whose status was not known
- At one point there were special new tasks that came up with regards to bargaining and strike preparation and when local 653 informed OPSEU that the work was not going to get done, OPSEU agreed to do the work themselves
- At one point the Divisional Executive reached out to local 653 with an offer of assistance if the help would benefit local organizing for our small union local – the offer was not taken by local 653
- There were new efforts to increase the number of stewards
- There were particular meetings, communications and efforts associated with issues related our union local members
- Management at Northern College announced work on campus for some faculty and work from home for other faculty
- Late in evening of March 17, 2022, OPSEU released a statement that the parties have reached an agreement to enter binding interest arbitration and the strike that was scheduled was called off
- On March 25, 2022, Arbitrator William Kaplan imposed a media blackout on the upcoming voluntary mediation-interest arbitration between the Colleges and College Faculty bargaining teams. The announced Terms and Conditions (from December 2021) remain in effect as the interim Collective Agreement.

I have undertaken specific initiatives in service to the union local:

- Sought out opportunities for sharing information with the union local and our members including information gleaned from newsletters, announcements, articles, and web postings
- Assisted with the organizing of multiple General Membership Meetings to provide information and to answer questions about bargaining and union items that were of interest to faculty
- Learned more about short- and long-term disability for faculty
- Revised a document (originally compiled by WS in 2015) that can be used by faculty to prepare for SWF workload meetings with their manager and also to check the contents of their SWF documents
- Submitted the local by-laws document for local 653 that might require proclamation from OPSEU
- When called upon, I attended meetings of the union local presidents, the Divisional Executive Committee, most particularly the preparatory meetings surrounding bargaining and strike activities and reported information back to the LEC
- Participated in a very lengthy hearing for combined grievances that were settled to the satisfaction of the member involved.

I have concerns:

- There continues to be new extra work for the union local to educate management with regards to the Collective Agreement. The possibility exists that some faculty are experiencing working conditions outside of the Collective Agreement because not all details are always known.
- I feel there was some new increased awareness of work and organized labour because of the Work-to-Rule actions that were undertaken but I am impressed that there were managers at Northern College who chose to diminish Work-to-Rule actions and to confront faculty during the Work-to-Rule actions.

- It is surprising that at the strike deadline, Northern College management chose to directly negotiate with the union local not to strike.
- Overall, I am concerned about the increased workload that faculty are experiencing. I feel that the mental health awareness and recognition at Northern College is not adequate particularly because there does not seem to be adequate efforts to address root causes. I am concerned that the approach to professional development (largely voluntary, no SWF time) is not adequate.

I am interested that our union local will continue to develop good communications, improved capabilities, and more thorough knowledge. There are signs that OPSEU might develop some new training or capacity building initiatives.

Warren Schaffer

1st Vice President – Local 653

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