

OPSEU Local 653 Meeting – LEC Minutes

Date: Tuesday, August 29, 2017

Location: Kirkland Lake Campus, Room A134

Attendance:

L. Shaba, S. Tremblay, N. McNair, S. Storing, C. Sheehan, M. Vielleux, M. Studd, K. Whelan, T. Dearden, D. Silver, W. Schaffer, K. Smith

Regrets:

None

Guest:

Peter McDonagh

Taker of Minutes:

W. Schaffer

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1.0 Call to Order

President called the meeting to order at 1:46PM

2.0 Adoption of the Agenda

Additions under New Business:

5.1 – Bargaining Update

5.2 – Discussion of the Bargaining and the General Membership Meeting (to occur on Wednesday, September 6, 2017)

5.3 – Vote preparation – September 14, 2017

5.4 – Strike Protocol

Motion: That the agenda be amended to only have a very few items (included below) and to defer the more traditional LEC meeting agenda until the next LEC meeting.

Moved:

Seconded:

Carried

3.0 Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Mike Studd submitted his financial statement dated August 23, 2017 and reviewed amounts found in the various categories of funds. He shared that the union local is still relatively financially healthy.

1) **Motion:** That the treasurer's tabled financial statements be accepted as presented

Moved: Kathy Smith

Seconded: Marc Vielleux

Carried

2) **Motion:** That the treasurer be given the authority to pay all outstanding expenses

Moved: Neal McNair

Seconded: Tyy Dearden

Carried

4.0 Reports of Officers

4.1 Chief Steward

Chief Steward Suzanne Tremblay shared that as of mid-summer 2017, the number of full-time faculty at Northern College sits at 68. There were 4 new faculty hires in recent months and all these faculty were formally partial-load professors. Each new faculty has been advised by the union to check that their placement on scale calculation was performed properly. Other faculty who were hired in the last few academic years are progressing such that they are no longer on probation. There are a few grievances in the works.

5.0 New Business

5.1 – Bargaining Update

President Lad Shaba shared that a decision was made not to have a formal communication to all members of the bargaining unit during the summer months as many faculty were on vacation. The communications officer (Neal McNair) has worked very diligently to keep the webpage for the union local (www.sixfivethree.ca) up to date to provide bargaining related information.

Neal McNair shared highlights of the bargaining to date:

- Demand setting for the new Collective Agreement occurred province-wide at all schools, in spring 2017.
- Four areas were identified and developed as the main pillars for demands by the union during bargaining – Academic Governance, Students and Faculty First, Privatization, On-line Learning.
- Following the presentation of the demands to the employer, the members of the college faculty Bargaining Team were notified that their proposals were not accepted.
- An offer of settlement was presented to the union side that included an extension of the current Collective Agreement with a bonus cash sum, salary increases, a stipulation against Article 2 grievances, and with a revenue neutral implementation of the new provincial Bill 148. The offer of settlement was set to expire on August 24, 2017.
- The union side filed for the assistance of a conciliator but this did not seem to move the process forwards.
- At present, the union has scheduled a strike vote for September 14, 2017 with the overall guidance that each member should consider the issues, including considering the losses that each member will experience with the terms put forth by the employer.

Peter McDonagh (Bargaining Advisory Committee Member, Northern College) offered that there has been only limited work conducted by the Bargaining Advisory Committee over the summer months because the bargaining progress has been limited.

5.2 – Discussion of the Bargaining and the General Membership Meeting (to occur on Wednesday, September 6, 2017)

Members of the LEC, in turn offered information and observations relevant to bargaining and the upcoming General Membership Meeting:

- The current Collective Agreement does not adequately account for the use of technology in teaching, nor multi-modal delivery of courses.
- There have been recent disturbing actions by management with regards to Article 11.08, including scheduling work for faculty without consent and assignment of work associated with the new COMMS system for course outlines.

- Management seems to want to maintain the status-quo (and not alter nor improve the Collective Agreement content).
- Student enrollment numbers are a challenge in northern Ontario.
- Marketing for academic programs at the Northern College is minimal or non-existent.
- Bargaining includes consideration of the lot and livelihood of current and future faculty.
- The current quality assurance initiative seems to be a way to impose more work on faculty.
- The union local could benefit by making ready information to explain what relief/assistance our members are likely to receive in the event of a strike.
- There are apprehensions about the numbers of international students and off-shore students, including how they are being taught, what they are being taught, and how their faculty are part of the union.
- Management at the moment is very top-down, communication is poor and does not involve the participation of faculty and management.
- Consultation does not result in use/inclusion/revisions to reflect input/information that was shared.
- Management seems to be showing that it is going to wait to impose its own terms for the new Collective Agreement without considerations of the input from the union.
- At each campus, stewards could copy and distribute or post information from the union bargaining team.
- At each campus, stewards could have face to face meetings with all members of the bargaining unit to assist with information flow.
- At each campus, a bulletin board could be used to present information with regards to bargaining.
- The provincial government does not seem to value the college post-secondary system in Ontario.
- Northern College Key Performance Indicators are low but there is not an appropriate response to this situation and faculty are not experiencing support in their work.
- The upcoming General Membership Meeting should include a free lunch for participants.
- At each campus, stewards should make it known to all bargaining unit members that the General Membership Meeting will occur on Wednesday, September 6, 2017, from 1:30PM-2:20PM with a presentation from the provincial college faculty Bargaining Team for 20-30 minutes, with 20 minutes for questions.

Motion: To provide financial support for the expenses associated with the upcoming General Membership Meeting (scheduled for Wednesday, September 6, 2017, from 1:30PM-2:20PM).

Moved: Kathy Smith

Seconded: David Silver

Carried

5.3 – Vote preparation – September 14, 2017

President Lad Shaba offered that the strike mandate vote will occur on Thursday, September 14, 2017 at the respective Northern College campuses, with additional information to be provided in the near future.

Second Vice-President Warren Schaffer offered that there are should be materials on hand at each campus to be used during the strike vote, that the notices of the vote will need to be posted, and that the vote protocol will include working with management to man the poll, count the votes, and report the results.

5.4 – Strike Protocol

This item was deferred until a later date.

6.0 Adjournment

Meeting Adjourned at 4:05PM