

CUPE WIRE

Official Publication of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 38
1439—9th Av. SE, Calgary, T2G 0T4, Phone (403)233-2700 Fax (403)290-1757
Email—office@cupe38.org Website—www.cupe38.org

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JANUARY 2022

Zoom Into the General Meeting

With the continuing restrictions on indoor gatherings by Alberta Health Services, the Executive of Local 38 has made the decision to cancel in-person meetings for January.

The January 25, 2022 Regular Membership meeting will be held through an on-line Zoom meeting. We encourage every *card-carrying member* to contact the office for the specific details to attend the meeting.

In an attempt to balance the confidentiality of the meeting with access for our members, we are asking the following:

1. Contact the Union Office at 403-233-2700 or office@cupe38.org to obtain the access code for the meeting.
2. When entering the Zoom meeting, please ensure your camera is on and that you identify yourself. We will need to confirm and record the name of all attendees. If a participant cannot be identified, they will be removed from the meeting.
3. Once the meeting starts, attendees will be given the instruction to turn off their camera if they desire to improve bandwidth.
4. If speaking, please activate your camera so other delegates can see who is speaking.

I want to thank everyone for their understanding during these times. While we prefer in-person meetings, to ensure the health and safety of our members, on-line meetings are needed to continue the democratic operations of our Local.



The Attack on Unions

In July 2020, the Kenney government passed Bill 32 that sought to restrict Unions from engaging in civil society. Using the title “Restoring Balance in the Alberta Workplaces”, this legislation seeks to place undue restrictions on unions while leaving the corporate world free to engage in the political sphere.

This 82-page omnibus bill makes sweeping changes to a handful of employment-related and labour-related legislation. Some of the most significant amendments were to Alberta Labour Relations Code, the law that regulates union-employer relations in the province. Almost a year after its introduction, many aspects of Bill 32 continue to be poorly understood for a number of reasons.

There is not enough space in this newsletter to review all of the changes made by Bill 32. However, effective February 1, 2022, some of the changes coming into effect will impact the City unions and members.

A key change to the Alberta Labour Code now requires Unions to seek each member to “opt-in” to “non-core” union activities. However, the Kenney government is now dictating to unions what is a “core” and what is a “non-core” activity. Unsurprisingly, the government has defined Non-Core activities as broadly as possible. It includes:

- General social causes or issues,
- Charities or non-governmental organizations,
- Organizations or groups affiliated with or supportive of a political party, and
- Any other activities the government adds through regulations

In December 2021, the Regulations were published requiring all Unions to obtain an expressed “opt-in” for any activity covered above. By August 2022, Local 38 must inform each member of the percentage of core vs. non-core activities and obtain a written opt-in. Without the opt-in, we cannot use the individual portion of dues for the activity.

With 5,200 members, this will be logistically impossible to achieve. As such, Local 38 made decisions throughout 2021 to ensure that all Local expenditures conform to “core” activities.

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Local 38 Committees

Over the years, the members of CUPE Local 38 have established standing committees within the Local to support communications, events and calls to action on a variety of issues. These committees are only effective with the participation of the members and we currently have some vacancies on these committees. Typically these committees meet monthly with the exception of July and August, and for now, these meetings are being held online. Committee elections occur in May each year, but elections can arise midway through the year in the case of a vacancy.

The Local currently supports four committees, the Public Relations and Education Committee (PR & Ed), the Social Committee, the Occupational Health & Safety Committee (OH & S) and the Equal Opportunities Committee (E.O.). Each one requires a different level of commitment, depending on the required deliverables of each committee.

The PR & Ed Committee has a monthly commitment to produce the newsletter for members to keep up to date on information regarding the Union and the workplace. This newsletter is now distributed via personal email and is sent out every month except July and August. The committee meets to discuss the content of the upcoming newsletter and any articles for the CUPE 38 website. In addition, this committee is tasked with selecting the winners of the annual scholarship award based on written submissions.

The Social Committee is tasked with planning and organizing the annual Children's Christmas Party and the annual Retiree's Banquet. While these two events have been impacted by the pandemic for the last two years, the intention is to get back to holding these events live as soon as we are able to do so safely. This committee also organizes other social events such as the Christmas Social, held at the December membership meeting, when face to face meetings are possible.

The OH & S Committee meets to discuss health and safety issues at our workplaces. They arrange and participate in site inspections at various locations operated by our employers. They report back to the members on any issues and how they are resolved at membership meetings. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, site visits have been on hold, so the committee often discusses and participates in online training offered by the Alberta Municipal Health & Safety Association (AMHSA) to keep the committee members up to date on new rules and legislation.

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Congratulations Cherise and Kevin!

It was with mixed emotions that CUPE Local 38 received the resignation of our former Vice-President, Tyler Johnson in late October 2021. While we wish him all the best in his new endeavors, it meant a loss to the Local, of a long term, bright and studious steward, executive member and recent vice-president. We thank Tyler for all his time and dedication to making the workplace better for all.

As per our Bylaws, a by-election was held at the General Membership meeting in November 2021 to elect a new Vice-President to fulfill the remainder of Tyler's term. At this meeting, Cherise Stock was acclaimed as our new Vice-President. Cherise is a familiar face to us and most of the membership as she has been actively involved with the local for many years, and was the Recording Secretary for the local until accepting the Vice-President role.

Cherise hails from the Communications business unit at The City of Calgary, and has been active in the Union since starting with the City in 2014. She was elected as a union steward for her business unit in September 2014. She then went on to be elected onto the Executive Board of CUPE Local 38 in the spring of 2015. In 2017, Cherise was successful in her campaign for Recording Secretary at April's membership meeting that year.

Cherise has been involved in most aspects of the local, such as sitting on the Public Relations & Education committee and the Social committee, as well as having delegate status to CUPE Calgary District Council, the Calgary & District Labour Council and the Calgary Alliance for the Common Good. In addition, she is a member of the ad hoc committees for the joint Job Evaluation and the Bargaining committee. As Cherise has increased her knowledge and experience of union business, her desire to take more of a leadership role has also grown. The membership will benefit from Cherise's knowledge, confidence and social activism. Congratulations Cherise!

As a result of Cherise vacating the Recording Secretary role, a by-election for Recording Secretary was held at the December membership meeting. The result of that process was Kevin Watson being acclaimed to this role.

Kevin is also a familiar face to most, as he has been with the City of Calgary Planning and Development department since 2007. He has been an active steward since 2011 and became a member of the Executive Board in 2014. In that time he has been a member of the Occupational Health & Safety committee and Social committee. Along with this involvement, Kevin has sat as Chair of the Social committee for a number of years and has many successful Children's' Christmas parties and Retirees Banquets on his list of accomplishments. Kevin is also a delegate to the Calgary & District Labour Council and currently sits on the Bargaining committee. We look forward to Kevin's energy and enthusiasm in the Recording Secretary role. Congratulations Kevin!

The Attack on Unions

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This means we will be unable to do the following:

- Participate in or donate to the Mayor's Food Drive;
- Support or donate to the Bow Valley Women's Shelter for the December 6th Day of Remembrance for Violence Against Women;
- Donate excess gifts from our Children's Christmas Party to children in need
- Support Truth and Reconciliation initiatives within the City of Calgary

The above are just some of the initiatives that the Kenney government's unconstitutional legislation will impact. Local 38 also made decisions to withdraw from Alberta Federation of Labour and our provincial CUPE organization, CUPE Alberta Division.

Over the next several months, we will be sending out letters to all members informing them of the change.

Local 38 Committees

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The E.O. Committee is a place for members to discuss employment equity, diversity, inclusion and social movements. The committee reports on these issues at the membership meetings and encourages members to participate in local workshops and events around these issues. Historically, the E.O. Committee has organized volunteers to help out at the Women's Centre and other charitable work.

Each committee is comprised of 5 members, except the OH & S Committee has 6 members. The reason for the additional member on OH & S is to provide a balanced committee, with 4 members from the City of Calgary and 2 members from ENMAX to partner in the site inspections. Each committee also has an Officer assigned as a liaison to the Executive Board. If you are interested in sitting on any of these committees, please contact the office for more information.

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH



Kind hearts are the gardens, Kind thoughts are the roots,
Kind words are the flowers, Kind deeds are the fruits,
Take care of your garden And keep out the weeds,
Fill it with sunshine, Kind words, and Kind deeds.

~Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Economic Rebound

While we all know about the challenges that 2021 brought us, 2022 is looking far more optimistic. Contract settlements across the province and across sectors are seeing monetary increases. In addition to that most organizations have been conservative in their growth plans throughout the pandemic, but we are now seeing a change and momentum is picking up.

The economic landscape is markedly better than a year ago. Oil prices benchmarks are sitting in the low \$80/barrel range. The Western Canada Select --- a key indicator for Alberta crude oil --- is closing the differential with the WTI benchmark. With this news, oil patch activity is now increasing. Coupled with this is Alberta, and in particular Calgary, making moves to diversify into significant Information Technology companies.

Along with the increased natural resource value, we are seeing growth in Alberta's renewable energy sector as well. RBC notes that there are currently 61, large scale solar projects underway and are set to operating by the mid-2020's.

Other key economic indicators are also showing favorable trends. Rigs drilling are up 79%, retail sales are up 3.8%, the housing market has increased sales by 31%, Alberta average weekly earnings are trending the third strongest in the country. With improved labour market conditions, and rising consumer confidence, we should see a boost in consumer spending and housing sales. A recent RBC report indicates that Alberta is expected to grow its economy by 4.7% in 2022.

Of course, with all of the good news is the threat of inflation. Alberta is no different than the rest of the country (and, in fact, the continent). Inflation remains stubbornly high. Transportation, housing and food top the list of categories driving the overall high inflation. Supply chain disruptions are one of many factors impacting the inflation rate. Along with climate factors impacting crops and transportation constraints across borders, we have seen the upward pressure increase. Gasoline prices and the grocery bill now top the household conversations!

As we continue to progress through 2022, we need to address the challenges but also focus on the positive. With the economy turning around, we will collectively be in a better position to move into a post-pandemic world.

REGULAR MEMBERSHIP MEETING

*All CUPE 38 Card Carrying Members
Invited to Attend*



**When: Tuesday, January 25, 2022
at 7:00 p.m.**

**Where: Via ZOOM
(SEE FRONT PAGE FOR DETAILS)
Business: Regular & Elections**

1. One (1) Executive Member-At-Large (Term to April 2022)
2. One (1) Delegate to AFL/CLC Winter School in Jasper—March 20-25, 2022
3. One (1) Member to Public Relations & Education (PR&Ed) Committee
4. One (1) Member to the Equal Opportunities (EO) Committee
5. One (1) Member to the Social Committee