

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 March.

The March 23rd, 2021 Regular General Membership meeting will be held through a 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.



Pensions Strong, But More Freedom Given to AIMCo

In 2019, the Provincial government passed legislation, *Bill 22 Reform of Agencies, Boards and Commissions and Government Enterprises Act, 2019*. Bill 66 not only upset the balance at the board that Local Authorities Pension Plan (LAPP) members fought to obtain, it rendered the LAPP Corporate Board as mute. As introduced by Finance Minister Toews, this bill provided the government more say in the investments made by our investment manager, AIMCo, regardless of what the Board has established as its investment plan.

LAPP's assets are invested by AIMCo based on direction set by the LAPP Corporate Board through an investment policy known as the Statement of Investment Policies and Procedures (SIPP). This document essentially establishes the mix of assets and types of investments the fund will hold. The Board applies reasoned decision making in creating the SIPP, with its members interests in mind. AIMCo is then tasked with providing the most sound financial decision making in deciding which investments to make, working within the SIPP. Bill 22 has enabled AIMCo to disregard the SIPP from LAPP Corporate Board, when it deems it an interference to sound financial decisions. This move opens a door to potential government interference.

AIMCo is a Crown Corporation, which means that the Provincial government has direct oversight of the business operations of this organization. The SIPP is the one means that the LAPP Board has of ensuring it's members best interests are being considered, not the politicians best interests. Members are concerned that this move would allow the current governing party to access the LAPP funds and use them to invest in risky projects in the Energy Sector. It would not be the first time this government invested heavily into a "troubled" project. Stay tuned!

Provincial Cuts Impact City Jobs

For many decades, the City of Calgary has been partnered with the Province of Alberta to provide youth probation and justice services in Calgary. A small portion of the vast services provided by The City, yet a huge value to those who need to access these services. Historically, the Province had provided 70% of the needed funding to this program, while The City picked up the remaining 30%. In January 2021, the UCP government announced an end to this long-standing partnership, with the intent to now centralize these services under the provincial Minister of Justice. All in the name of streamlining services and cutting costs. The terms, streamlining and centralizing are familiar buzz words from the UCP, as they are frequently used when making moves to reduce services to Albertans and cut jobs. Most recently, they have committed to helping the municipalities “live within their means...” by reducing provincial funding for the Municipal Sustainability Initiative by 25% over the next 3 years. This signals this governments’ intent to continue to interfere in the day to day services that municipalities provide and to further starve the programs that citizens rely upon.

The end of the Youth Probation service is a recent example, and it has resulted in approximately 29 job losses to the Calgary Neighbourhoods business unit. These are our social workers and their support staff that have received lay-off notices. While lay-offs are stressful for those impacted, those same people have voiced their first concern as, less about the loss of their work, and more about the impact it will have on the vulnerable youth. We have heard from our members that they feel the provincial government has no plan in place for a transition for these youth and that they will be lost in the void of the larger Alberta probation system. These are valid and heartfelt concerns from people that are trained to look out for societies vulnerable and at-risk populations. Unfortunately, these concerns seem to be falling on deaf ears in favour of the UCP’s plan to forge ahead with cuts to programs they deem unnecessary.

While these decisions were unrelated to COVID, the additional loss of funding will exacerbate the damage already done to our budgets as a result of the pandemic restrictions. As we see other losses at The City have been in direct relation to the pandemic’s impact on services. Many positions in recreation have been eliminated as a result of the ongoing facility closures. In January 2021, 18 permanent Local 38 members and many temporary staff in Recreation received their lay-off notices.

Work From Home Tax Deduction

The Federal government introduced a simplified claim to offset work-at-home expenses. If you worked more than 50% of the time from home for a period of at least four consecutive weeks in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, you can claim \$2 for each day you worked from home during that period. The maximum amount that can be claimed is \$400 per individual. This method can only be used for the 2020 tax year.

You must meet the following criteria to qualify for the benefit:

- You worked from home in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. If you were not required to work from home, but you were provided with the choice to work at home because of the pandemic, then Revenue Canada considers you to have worked from home due to COVID-19
- You must have worked more than 50% of the time from home for a period of at least four consecutive weeks in 2020;
- You were not reimbursed for all of your home office expenses

The \$2 per day is a substitute for actual home office expenses paid by an individual, such as rent, electricity, home internet access fees, office supplies (e.g., pens, paper) and unreimbursed cell phone costs. It is important to note that individuals who want to claim other employment expenses, such as employment-related auto expenses, must use the detailed method rather than the simplified claim.

Although the simplified claim is limited, an advantage is an individual does not need to have their employer complete and sign a Form T2200 or T2200S, although they should do their best to document how many days they worked at home. Another advantage is they do not need to determine and summarize eligible costs, or keep receipts.

Many members will be eligible for this deduction. If you require more detailed information, visit the Canada Revenue Agency website for Home office expenses for employees.

Protect Calgary's Future

It's no secret that Calgary is in an economic crisis. But for some reason, our current city council thinks the answer is putting even more of us out of work. We know that's not the solution.

So far, city hall has:

- Authorized mass layoffs
- Frozen city services
- Crippled emergency services

It's obvious that this council thinks workers are disposable.

That's why it's essential that we band together and protect the people that keep this city running – workers like us.

To do that, we're supporting *Calgary's Future*; a worker-funded campaign made up of a diverse range of community leaders and regular Calgarians who want to build a city council that works for all of us.

They understand that the backbone of any great city is a strong public sector workforce, and they want to elect leaders who will fight to defend that.

We can elect community leaders with a plan for a resilient economy, quality city services, and strong vibrant neighbourhoods – but only if we work together.

Calgary needs councillors with a vision for our future, who understand the issues affecting us, and who we can trust to get the job done – without lining their friends' pockets with our tax dollars.

We need to elect a city council that works for all Calgarians, not just a privileged few.

Join the fight at calgarysfuture.ca/cupe38



Advance Notice of CUPE Local 38 Elections

At the Regular General Meeting on April 27, 2021 the following positions will be open for a two (2) year term:

1. **Business Agent (Full Time)**
2. **Vice President**
3. **Recording Secretary**
4. **Five (5) Executive Members-At-Large**
5. **One (1) Trustees (Term to 2024)**

To be eligible for nominations for any of the offices, members must have attended at least 50% of the Regular General Meetings in the twelve (12) months immediately prior to the election. The member must be present at the April meeting, or indicate in writing to the Recording Secretary a willingness to stand for nomination.

In accordance with the CUPE Local 38 bylaws, in order to be eligible for the office of Business Agent, Vice President and Recording Secretary, a member shall declare their intention to run at the March Regular Meeting. This declaration can be made verbally at the March meeting or by submitting a written declaration witnessed by another member which is to be read at the March meeting.

Bargaining Update

In January your Bargaining Team met with the City to exchange proposals. Both sides submitted lengthy proposals, and it is clear that this will be a lengthy round of bargaining.

We often get questions asking how long it will take to conclude bargaining. There is no specific timeline required to achieve a new collective agreement. The Alberta Labour Code requires both parties to bargain in good faith. This means that both sides must exchange proposals and make efforts to reach an agreement. In order to achieve this, the parties need to fully discuss and understand the proposals at the table. Given the large number of proposals between Local 38 and the City, this will clearly take some time to accomplish.

We will endeavor to keep you informed of our progress. . We continue to follow the improving economic conditions in Calgary and Alberta, and this will guide our discussions at the bargaining table. As in the past, it is our intention to reach a fair and reasonable settlement for all members.

REGULAR MEMBERSHIP MEETING

*All CUPE 38 Card Carrying Members
Invited to Attend*



**When: Tuesday, March 23, 2021
at 7:00 p.m.**

Where: Via ZOOM

(SEE FRONT PAGE FOR DETAILS)

Business: Regular & Elections

1. Three (3) Eligible Delegates to CLC Virtual Convention, June 16-18, 2021

**Declaration of Intention to run for Officer Elections:
Please see Page 3 for “Advance Notice of Elections” information**