



BARGAINING BULLETIN

VOL.6

Council repudiates Mayor's agenda

The rejection of much of the Mayor-supported budget by City Council proves that our campaign for public support is working. Your calls to councillors as well as behind-the-scenes wrangling by our allies has influenced councillors to oppose some of the most onerous budget cuts.

On Jan. 17, Council voted to reinstate almost \$20 million of the proposed cuts to hostels and daycare centres, recreation programs and school pools. In the process, some Local 79 jobs were saved.

However, the 2012 budget still cuts \$59 million from the City finances, resulting in the loss of more than 600 full-time equivalents (FTEs) for Local 79, affecting most City divisions. By a narrow vote, Council failed to reverse the contracting out of cleaning jobs in City facilities.

Bargaining in the media

There has been much reported in the media about negotiations with Local 416.

Our Local 79 bargaining team is determined not to bargain in the media. We believe that the best agreements are reached at the bargaining table, where the two sides meet to discuss the issues at stake and reach agreements, without being subject to daily interpretation by the media. Local 79's negotiating history with the City goes back 70 years. Our four Collective Agreements are complex documents negotiated over many rounds of bargaining.

We'll make sure that we have all the information on our website that you need in order to follow the bargaining process.

A word about "Service efficiencies"

In addition to the jobs cuts and contracting out of cleaning services in the 2012 budget, there is a potential for \$300-million more cuts emanating from "service efficiency reviews" that could include contracting out of hostels, childcare centres and the potential sale of nine of our ten Long Term Care Homes. Under the service efficiency review, the City intends to contract out all but three of the City's shelters. In addition, the Task Force on Homelessness has yet to report. Local 79 is not opposed to exploring efficiencies with the City, but we don't believe contracting out our services to the private sector is an efficiency.

This underscores our need to fight to keep the employment security provisions of our Collective Agreements. Without them, the Ford administration will have a free rein to contract out, cut services and lay off Local 79 members, often without even going to City Council for permission.

Employment Security is a common provision

The truth is, not one Local 79 member has a job for life. If there's no work, there's no job -- it's that simple.

What our Collective Agreements do provide is the assurance that employees who do their jobs won't be subject to arbitrary actions by the employer. And they contain a redeployment process that requires the City to honour seniority and find alternative positions when the City makes changes.

Employment security is a basic right of unionization – it's the big reason why people join unions. In fact, our contract language is similar to that of most municipal union contracts across Canada. Negotiated between two parties over many rounds of bargaining, these contract clauses express mutual loyalty to the City and reward our years of service.

This benefits the City and the residents who rely on those services, just as much as workers who deliver them. The public doesn't want City services delivered by a revolving-door of low-wage workers. The City is not McDonalds.

Solidarity with our sisters and brothers

Most of the media focus is now on Local 416 negotiations, which started its bargaining before the other CUPE City locals. The City has asked for a “no board” report on 416 bargaining, which was issued today (January 19, 2012) from the Ontario Ministry of Labour, starting a countdown to a possible lockout in early February.

Local 79 remains on a different schedule, with dates scheduled to the end of the month. Bargaining has only just begun for Local 4948, representing library workers, and it has yet to start for Local 2998, representing the Association of Community Centres.

Many of the concessions on our table are similar to those faced by the other locals. While we will continue to work in support of each other, Local 79 is determined to negotiate our Collective Agreements at the bargaining table. It takes time to negotiate four agreements for 20,000 members.

We are grateful for the show of strength from other CUPE locals and unions across the city and the province who have met to plan activities to support us. Paul Moist, the president of CUPE National, addressed Local 79 stewards Jan.14, pledging continued support from CUPE members across Canada.

CUPE National released an Environics poll showing public support for City services and a public condemnation of the City's budget agenda. CUPE will also launch a new series of television ads in Toronto on Jan. 19. The ads call for fair contract negotiations. See the ad at torontotogether.ca

It's important that you continue to log onto the Members' Portal on our website to get the latest information, and continue to talk to your friends and neighbours to make sure they understand our situation. The tide of public opinion is turning in our favour.

In solidarity,



Tim Maguire
President

On behalf of your Local 79 Bargaining Committees:

Tim Maguire, Nancy Murphy, David Kidd, Ainsworth Hamilton, Sofia Reno, Lily Chang, Garth Barry, Jason Desjardins, Deborah Dixon, Sandra Higginson, Beverley Pike, Yvonne Bell, Simon Collins, Doug Jones, Tannis Khan, Maria Kolominsky, Myrna Mandani, Daphne Penton, Mary Villa