

## Bargaining Bulletin No. 2

# Riverbend Crossing

**Date: July 12, 2021**

Greetings Sisters and Brothers,

The Union and the Employer commenced bargaining on June 24, 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic has meant that our meetings are all done on-line through virtual meeting rooms. It's not ideal, as it adds a lot of time to the bargaining process.

We tabled our non-monetary proposals on June 24, 2020. We utilized the Westpark Crossing Agreement that we bargained with this same Employer less than three years ago. Our thinking was the two facilities, Riverbend Crossing and Westpark Crossing, are very similar in structure, the type of work performed and the job classifications utilized at both sites.

At the commencement of bargaining, it was frustrating to see the Employer initially push back on a lot of the contract language they had already agreed to in the West Park Crossing Agreement.

Bargaining was delayed further by COVID-19 outbreaks in several of the Employer's Extendicare facilities as their Lead Negotiator for Riverbend Crossing was directed to assist with the outbreak protocols and led to the cancellation of our December 2020 bargaining dates.

The parties met virtually on February 11 and 12, 2021. Bargaining was then put on hold when our chief negotiator Bob Desjarlais got sick and then ultimately passed away. We resumed bargaining on May 6 and then again on June 9 and 10; June 16 and 17. The bargaining committee held a virtual membership meeting on June 14 to provide information on bargaining and answer questions.

Through lots of discussions and much perseverance, we reached agreement in principle on a significant number of non-monetary proposals. Issues like seniority, a grievance/arbitration process to deal with disputes, and how our members are awarded jobs through the job posting procedure have been addressed.

Hours of work for full time and casual employees is a contentious issue and is still in the process of being resolved. Full-time hours are 80 hours in two weeks for kitchen, housekeeping and office staff; 75 hours in two weeks for Resident Assistants (RAs), Nurses and Medical Care Assistants (MCAs). The current four on-two off work schedule for the RAs, Nurses, and MCAs means that full-time employees are not scheduled to work full-time hours. In order to be scheduled for full-time hours, receive pay equal to full-time, receive

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full-time seniority hours and get full-time pay for benefits such as vacation, work schedules will need to be modified and different work patterns will need to be utilized.

Monetary proposals remain outstanding. Improvements to wages and benefits, paid leaves (e.g. sick leave) and a wage schedule with three steps for each job classification were tabled with the Employer in a comprehensive proposal package to conclude bargaining on June 17, 2021.

Due to summer vacation schedules and the ongoing COVID-19 responsibilities of the Employer, the next dates scheduled for bargaining are September 7, 9, and 16. Your bargaining committee is hopeful that at that time, the parties will be very close to reaching a tentative agreement that we can bring out to you all with a positive recommendation.

Your bargaining committee thanks you for the support you all have shown us. As members of SEIU-West, it is your right to get the best deal possible. Your committee demands a fair and reasonable agreement for front line personal care workers – you deserve it. Your support for us gives us the power to demand the Employer do better.

Please continue to check out your Union Bulletin Board, or [seiuwest.ca](http://seiuwest.ca) for further updates. If you have any questions about your workplace, please contact the Member Resource Centre (MRC) at 1-888-999-7348 ex. 2298. The MRC Officers will be able to assist you or will refer your question if necessary.

Your participation in your Union makes your Union strong!

In Solidarity,

***Your SEIU-West River Bend Crossing Bargaining Committee***

Shailini Pascua (Unit Chair) • **Staff:** Katelyn Almen (Union Representative) • Bob Laurie (Director of Contract Bargaining and Enforcement).