

March 2020

PRESIDENT'S REPORT to the Regular Meeting

President Stephen von Sychowski reported on activities since the February 2020 meeting.

Political Action

Our Housing Action Team met on February 26, with guests from the Vancouver Tenants Union. We are working together on the campaign for improved renter protections, per the recommendation passed last meeting.

On March 10 a motion came to Vancouver City Council to become a Blue Community, an initiative of the Council of Canadians and CUPE, which we endorsed last year. Also, on March 10 a motion came forward on Access Without Fear, which we have supported since the original Sanctuary City policies were passed under the previous Vision council and school board. This new motion was brought forward by Swanson and Boyle and is toughening up the policy. Finally, there was a motion regarding Period Promise and Vancouver providing menstrual products at city facilities for those who need them. These motions were all approved on March 12.

I am continuing to participate in a Working Group to Prevent Violence in the Hospitality Industry, along with UNITE HERE Local 40 and various anti-violence and business groups. This working group was set up by the city in response to the motion passed by council on this topic last Fall.

The NWDLC is organizing a conference at the Anvil Centre on October 23 on municipal issues and has asked us to co-sponsor it. The idea of this is a check in on some key municipal issues half-way through the term. Details are being worked out currently.

Committees

Our Women's Committee held its annual International Women's Day dinner on March 8th at the Fraserview Hall. It was a very good event and ticket sales were strong once again. The keynote was provided by April Sims, Secretary Treasurer of the Washington State AFL-CIO.

May Day planning is now underway.

Labour Disputes

IBEW Local 213 is still on strike against Ledcor LTS. We organized a solidarity rally with them on March 12.

Labour Education

We held our Canada Labour Code Parts 1 & 2 course on March 3-4 with Tamara Rasmusovic. It was a relatively small group but this has been the norm with this course as relatively few affiliates deal with the federal code compared to the provincial one. It was nonetheless a very good course.

We held our sold-out Decolonization workshop on March 7. It was well attended and received tremendous feedback from participants. The workshop was facilitated by Hummingbirds Rising Consulting.

YVR Joint Union Committee

Our YVR JUC met for the third time on February 28. The Committee is continuing to move toward a possible joint campaign of airport workers around living wage, contract flipping, and job security. We are in the research phase and part of this will be listening to members to see where they are at on these issues and to identify compelling stories that can be used in a campaign. We have had involvement from IAMAW, PSAC, MoveUP, and UNITE HERE and expressions of interest from Teamsters, UA, Air Canada Pilots, and IBEW. We are also reaching out to other unions to increase engagement.

Metro Vancouver Alliance

The MVA recently held a number of events including planning sessions aimed at placing the organization on a clear path with a firm plan for regrouping and rebuilding the capacity lost in recent months due to some organizational and financial problems and the loss of its full-time organizer. Based on my participation in the planning session it appears that a reasonable plan is in place. If your union is not a member of MVA, I would be happy to discuss that with you further.

Queen Alexandra Elementary

I attended an event at the QAS which they organized to thank the various groups which work with the school or sponsor various things. It was actually quite a moving event hearing from parents, teachers, and students about what our support actually has meant to them. It was a reinforcement of why we do that work. We will be starting to plan our 2020 fundraiser shortly.

Events Attended

February 18 – Working Group to Prevent Violence in the Hospitality Industry

February 19 – United Way Labour Cabinet of the Board

February 19 – BCFED Community Social Action Committee

February 24 – Meeting with OneCity Representatives

February 25 – United Way Board of Directors

February 26 – Pink Shirt Day

February 26 – Housing Action Team

February 27 – Metro Vancouver Alliance Sponsoring Team Planning Session

February 28 – YVR Joint Union Committee

February 28 – Day of Mourning Planning Committee

March 3-4 – Canada Labour Code Part 1 & 2 course

March 3 – United Way Community Investment Research Committee tour – Burke Mountain

March 3 – May Day Planning Committee

March 7 – Decolonization Workshop

March 8 – International Women’s Day Dinner

March 10 – Living Wage for Families Municipal Committee

March 10 – Working Group to Prevent Violence in the Hospitality Industry

March 10 – Renter Protection Campaign Planning Meeting

March 11 – Blue Community, Access Without Fear, and Period Promise motions at Vancouver City Council

March 12 – VDLC Executive Board

March 12 – Solidarity visit to IBEW 213 picket line

March 13 – United Way Community Investment Research Committee

March 16 – BC Employment Standards Coalition

March 17 – Regular Meeting