



**REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 2018**

1. LOCATION: Maritime Labour Centre, 1880 Triumph Street, Vancouver, BC

The VDLC acknowledges that this meeting is being held on the unceded traditional territory of the Musqueam, Squamish, Tsleil-Watuth, and other First Nations people.

2. CHAIRPERSON: Terry Engler, 1st Vice President

3. ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

MSC that the minutes of the March 20, 2018 meeting be adopted.

4. CREDENTIALS: NIL

5. GUEST SPEAKERS:

a) Nikki Koutsochilis, BIPOC Municipal Town Hall

BIPOC stands for Black, Indigenous, People Of Colour. Through various conversations, it became clear that the voices of marginalized people in the municipal elections is not being heard, nor are we seeing them represented in political office, or even at the head of progressive organizations, including unions. With that in mind, a BIPOC Municipal Town Hall is being held Monday, April 30; this is meant to be the first of a series of such events. It is only open to those that identify as Black, Indigenous, or as People of Colour. A sign-up sheet was left for anyone that would like to participate.

b) Rodrigo Samayoa, Affordable BC

In BC, housing prices are going up faster than incomes; a way for unions to protect their members' incomes, is through stabilizing housing prices. BC is now the most expensive province to live in, in Canada. At the last convention, BCGEU membership told their union that they want them to start doing something about that.

A key factor is that real estate has become a vehicle for speculative investment, rather than for housing. This is not just due to wealthy foreign and domestic buyers using properties as investments and tax havens. Banks are helping to drive costs but allowing buyers to take out higher and higher loans, which increases their profits. We're seeing a huge transfer of wealth, from workers to banks. With the need for home/building owners to be paying more towards mortgages, it drives up rental rates. There is no longer any relation between income and housing prices – 6 of the 10 least affordable cities in Canada are in BC.

What is the solution? A plan has been put together to stabilize housing prices.

- Reformation of property taxes to target speculators and raise funds for affordable housing infrastructure.

- A big part of which is a land value capture tax. What is a land value capture tax? Land value is increased by public investment around the property (ie. Parks, schools, transit, community centre) and those gains go into private hands. What the land value capture tax tries to do is tax some of those land value gains of the property owners and reinvest it into the community.
- Reformation of property transfer taxes to target high end investors. The government is already doing this by adding a tax for people with homes worth over \$3 million; their version of speculation tax, for those that don't reside, or pay taxes in BC; and have reformed the foreign buyers' tax by expanding the area that it is applied to.
- Amend legislation to better protect renters and better regulate real estate transactions. They are asking for the closing of some loop holes that allow landlords to increase rents. The BC NDP is already doing some of this, by passing legislation that will help renters.
- Invest in new and affordable housing infrastructure.

While we are seeing some movement in the right direction by our government there is a lot more to be done. While current policies will help supply more affordable housing, they will not stabilize prices. We need to implement more progressive policy to stabilize prices and make housing about homes, not commodity investments.

6. PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

President Stephen von Sychowski reported on VDLC activities since the March 20, 2018 meeting.

Political Action

Everything is on track for the Vancouver Crossroads Conference on May 4 and 5. This is an open, non-partisan event to discuss the issues facing the city and imagine solutions for the type of city we want. We anticipate it selling out, and building some good energy for different groups and individuals to work together for a progressive city between now and Election Day.

Delegates are encouraged to help ensure their unions participate in the conference, promote it, and purchase tickets.

On May 6 and, if necessary, 7, Joey Hartman and I will mediate a process with COPE, Greens, OneCity, Team Jean, and Vision, aimed at formalizing an accommodation agreement. So far all groups are committed and things are looking very positive despite the fact that this is a monumental task.

VDLC Labour Education

Our next course offerings are:

- Privacy Rights
 - May 16
 - Advanced
 - Instructor: Jamie Baugh
- Pension Law
 - May 17

- Advanced – for administrators, trustees, and negotiators
- Instructors: Susan Philpott & Simon Archer

Delegates are encouraged to register and help promote.

Day of Mourning

The Day of Mourning event in Vancouver is April 28 at Jack Poole Plaza (Convention Centre) at 11:45 am. Sister Lanzinger from the BC Fed will speak on behalf of labour, I will MC.

Labour Day

We have reached our required threshold for affiliate pledges in order to go ahead with Labour Day at the PNE. The unions who have pledged have been notified, as well as the members of our adhoc committee, of a meeting on April 25 at which we will meet with Karen Massicotte, Director of Partnerships at the PNE, and will begin planning the logistics of the event.

The New Westminster and District Labour Council has also decided to join us in this event this year.

Just Transition on Climate Change

The April 5 and 6 Just Transition events brought together representatives of government, labour, business, community, and First Nations along with international guests to engage in meaningful conversation about how to move towards a Just Transition for workers whose employment is impacted by climate change and our shifting economy. Thank you to Joey Hartman for her tremendous work on this event on our behalf.

Metro Vancouver Alliance

The MVA Leadership Institute has been reduced to one day, May 15 from 10 am to 3 pm; registration begins at 9:30 am. Several Executive members have registered, delegates are encourage to do so.

I will be participating in the MVA on behalf of the labour council on the Strategy Team and Coordinating Committee.

May Day

Plans for May Day are continuing to move ahead steadily. We will have the day time event previously reported, beginning at 2 pm at Jack Poole Plaza and marching to Bentall Centre for a rally. Left Coast Labour Choir will perform some songs and we will have speakers on a variety of subjects. The theme of the event is, “Stand Up, Fight Back.”

Following this, we are working with UFCW Local 1518 to organize a rally at City Square Safeway store in Vancouver.

Joey Hartman Retirement

The retirement social for Joey Hartman was a tremendous success, with more people attending that anticipated and positive feedback about the event all around (most importantly, from Joey). We had a number of speakers to highlight Joey’s contributions, as well as a

video of MLA Mable Elmore speaking about Joey's retirement in the legislature. There was also a wonderful slide show of photos from Joey's life as an activist. We presented Joey with a memory book, which included contributions from many family, friends, and colleagues. Thank you to everyone who assisted in organizing this event and especially to Keziah for the enormous amount of work she put in to make it the success that it was.

Labour Code Section 3

We sent a written submission to the Section 3 review, and our submission was also presented last month at the public consultation by 1st Vice President Terry Engler.

Adopt-an-Organizer Program

I met recently with Monica Urrutia, the coordinator of our Adopt-an-Organizer program wherein we coordinate affiliate donations to support union activities in the Philippines. Monica is looking to organize a tour to the Philippines to visit the projects that the program funds. I have agreed to VDLC assistance with some coordination and promotion of this, however, I have noted that we do not pay for anyone to attend international tours due to limited finances and other priorities. If VDLC delegates wish to attend they could of course do so, at their own cost. The hope is that this tour can be followed by some report back events which may inspire broader support for the program and allow us to fund further activities in the Philippines, which remains one of the most dangerous places in the world to be a union organizer.

7. CORRESPONDENCE: *Circulated at meeting.*

8. EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS:

a) *MSC that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: Spending Authorizations

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL authorize the following expenditures:

- CCPA BC – 2018 membership renewal – At a cost of \$100.00
- On the Line book purchase – At a cost of \$42 + \$12 shipping
- We Speak Squamish Gala Fundraiser, May 11, for revitalization of Squamish language – Purchase 2 tickets at a cost of \$200.00

b) *MSC that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: Support for BIPOC Municipal Town Hall

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL support the BIPOC Municipal Town Hall being organized for April 30 from 6 to 9 pm by promoting the event.

c) *MSC that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: Solidarity with CUPE Local 3903

BECAUSE members of CUPE Local 3903 at York University have been on strike since March 5; and

BECAUSE CUPE 3903 is fighting for a fair collective agreement including stable funding throughout the year for Teaching Assistants (Unit 1); job security and work stabilization for Contract Faculty (Unit 2); reversing the loss of union rights and

protection, and the unilateral elimination of 800 jobs for Graduate Assistants (Unit 3); and addressing Equity and Accessibility concerns; and

BECAUSE CUPE Local 3903 has reached out to the labour movement across Canada for support and solidarity,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL write a letter to York University President Rhonda L. Lenton (copy to CUPE Local 3903) calling on the University to return to the bargaining table and bargain in good faith with CUPE Local 3903; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL FURTHER promote the call for solidarity via its contact lists, website, and social media; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL FINALLY make a donation of \$100.00 to the CUPE Local 3903 strike fund via its GoFundMe campaign.

d) *MSC that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: Affordable BC

BECAUSE British Columbia has been gripped by a housing affordability crisis that has deprived an entire generation of the ability to rent or own housing that fits their needs; and

BECAUSE Affordable BC is calling on the provincial government to follow a few simple steps to fix the housing affordability crisis:

- Reform property taxes to target speculators and raise funds for affordable housing and infrastructure;
- Amend legislation to protect renters and better regulate real estate transactions; and
- Invest in new affordable public housing and infrastructure; and

BECAUSE the campaign has been launched by one of our affiliate unions, BCGEU;

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL endorse Affordable BC; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL FURTHER write a letter to Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, the Honourable Shane Simpson, in support of the campaign; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL FURTHER explore the possibility of launching a new committee to work on housing and related issues; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL FINALLY share information about Affordable BC with our delegates and more broadly via our social media.

e) *MSC that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: Solidarity with Lula de Silva

BECAUSE the then-President of Brazil, Dilma Rousseff, was undemocratically and illegitimately removed from office in December 2017 by the vote of sixty-two senators, despite having been elected by fifty-four million Brazilian citizens; and

BECAUSE there is now an unprecedented campaign of defamation being carried out by right-wing and corporate forces within Brazil and supported by external imperialist forces against former President Lula de Silva aimed at discrediting him and the Workers Party, barring him from candidacy in this year's election, and imprisoning him; and

BECAUSE reforms implemented under Lula's social-democratic government lifted millions out of poverty; and

BECAUSE Lula was sentenced earlier this month to twelve years and one month for alleged corruption despite no evidence being presented to demonstrate his guilt; and

BECAUSE there is now a risk to Brazil's fragile democracy;

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL condemn the politically motivated attacks on, and imprisonment of, Lula de Silva and call for his immediate release from prison; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL FURTHER sign on to the #StandWithLula campaign (standwithlula.org) with currently has gathered nearly 40,000 signatories including the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC); and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL FINALLY support and participate, where possible, in local activities in solidarity with Lula.

f) *MSC that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: Open Letter re: Land Day Massacre

BECAUSE on March 30, 2018, thousands of peaceful Palestinian protestors gathered along a fence separating Gaza from Israel in order to mark Land Day, and were met with violence from Israeli forces which left 17 dead and approximately 1,400 wounded; and

BECAUSE the Israeli blockade of Gaza has rendered it nearly unliveable and has been called an "extraordinarily inhuman and unjust process of strangling gradually two million civilians in Gaza that really pose a threat to nobody," by Robert Piper, the UN's humanitarian coordinator for West Bank and Gaza; and

BECAUSE the Palestinian people have endured seventy years of dispossession, now exacerbated by the proliferation and planned annexation of illegal settlements under the extremist government of Benjamin Netanyahu and emboldened by the Trump administration in the United States; and

BECAUSE two days before Land Day, Foreign Minister Freeland tweeted “Canada will always do its utmost to defend #humanrights around the world,” yet Canada has taken no action with regards to the massacre of unarmed Palestinians on Land Day,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL continue its long tradition of solidarity with the Palestinian people by signing on to the open letter to party leaders (<https://tinyurl.com/vagvecgu>) which has been signed by dozens of civil societies across the country calling on the Federal government to: “Condemn Israel’s use of lethal force to suppress peaceful protest; demand an independent and transparent investigation into the killing and wounding of unarmed Land Day protesters by Israeli forces; and call for the imposition of appropriate economic sanctions by the Canadian government and UN on those parties who are complicit in the violation of Palestinian human rights.”; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL FURTHER promote the open letter and its aims via social media and other means; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL FINALLY support and participate, where possible, in local events in solidarity with Palestine.

g) *MSC that the following recommendation be adopted*

Subject: No War with Syria

BECAUSE the United States, accompanied by Britain and France, launched airstrikes on Syria on April 13; and

BECAUSE on April 9 Israel launched missiles at a Syrian airbase near Homs, killing at least fourteen people; and

BECAUSE in recent months Turkey has invaded northern Syria, occupying Afrin, and continuing to wage war against the Kurdish people in that region; and

BECAUSE there is an intensifying danger of further intervention on the part of the United States and its allies, which is aimed at regime change and advancement of their strategic and economic interests in the region; and

BECAUSE such intervention threatens to expand and intensify the existing conflict dangerously in the direction of a regional or even global scope; and

BECAUSE Prime Minister Trudeau has spoken favourably of the actions of the United States and its allies, and has not ruled out Canadian involvement in the conflict in the future,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL write to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau condemning the actions of the United States and its allies, including Israel and Turkey, calling for respect for sovereignty and self-determination, and opposing Canada’s involvement in, or support of, any further acts of war against Syria, including against the Kurdish people in northern Syria.

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL FINALLY support and participate, where possible, in local activities opposing war against Syria.

h) *MSC that the following recommendation be adopted*

Subject: Good Jobs Network

BECAUSE the Vancouver and District Labour Council is a living wage employer and is registered as such via the Living Wage for Families campaign; and

BECAUSE the Vancouver and District Labour Council has previously adopted motions establishing our support for a \$15/hour minimum wage, and for improved employment standards; and

BECAUSE the Living Wage for Families campaign has recently launched the Good Jobs Network and has invited us to sign up to the network, which requires making the following commitments as an employer:

1. Support the increase of the minimum wage to \$15 an hour;
2. Giving employees at least one week's notice of their work schedule and provide paid sick leave; and
3. Following the Employment Standards Act

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL sign up as a member of the Good Jobs Network.

9. REPORT OF UNIONS:

The following report was missed in the March minutes:

a) HEU North Shore Community Local – Reported by Graham O’Neill

HEU will be submitting their concerns at the review of the BC Labour Code. Three of the main concerns of unionized healthcare under Bill 29 are: raiding, successorship, and sectoral bargaining. In particular, these three matter to HEU and other healthcare unions, as healthcare workers can be contracted out or their employers lose the contract, or the ownership of a facility changes and employees do not get successorship rights. Raiding is a concern as it is an ongoing issue. Also included will be issues around Section 54, first collective agreements, prompt representation votes, and limiting employer speech.

The following reports are from the April meeting:

b) ILWU Local 500 – Reported by Joulene Parent

ILWU held its 35th Convention the week of April 14, with the theme, *Union Rights = Human Rights*. The convention was full of lively debates and conversations. Premier John Horgan and MLA Shane Simpson were in attendance. Elections were held: Rob Ashton, re-elected President; Pat Bolen, elected 1st Vice President; Bob Dhaliwal, re-elected Secretary Treasurer; Dan Kask, elected 2nd Vice President; and Cliff Wellicome, elected 3rd Vice President. ILWU made a constitutional change to replace current language, with gender neutral pronouns.

There was an evacuation at Centerm due to a chemical smell.

The following reports were made but not submitted for the minutes:

a) UFCW Local 1518 – Reported by Stefan Nielsen

- b) ILWU Local 400 – Reported by Jason Woods
- c) CUPW Local 846 Vancouver – Reported by Mary Ann Dominato

MSC to adopt the reports of unions.

10. REPORT OF COMMITTEES: NIL

OTHER REPORTS:

- a) CLC – Reported by Ron Stipp

Pharmacare campaign continues. The federal government's Health Committee has adopted the Pharmacare program and has introduced it to the House of Commons. It is expected that most parties will adopt some form of universal plan for the next election. The Federal Liberal Convention announced that they have adopted the plan.

Day of Mourning, April 28, the theme is *Better Protections Against Workplace Violence and Harassment*. These are important events to attend.

Municipal elections are this fall. The VDLC has a plan in place for endorsements, as do labour councils across the province. New communications materials are available to endorsed candidates, as is candidate and campaign training. Sign up for campaign training will be through the BC Fed.

Elimination of the server wage is something to celebrate; another positive move forward with this government.

MSC to receive the other reports.

11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NIL

12. NOMINATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE BOARD

There are 5 positions for available for Member-at-Large.

Crystyna Sawyer, HEU PHSA Local, was nominated and acclaimed as a Member-at-Large.

13. NEW BUSINESS: NIL

14. NOTICE OF MOTION: NIL

15. GOOD AND WELFARE:

- 50/50 Proceeds to benefit the Solidarity in Action Committee
- BC Health Coalition protest May 1 at the False Creek surgical centre at 10:30 am.
- A film is being shown, *The Young Karl Marx*, 7 pm, at 706 Clark Drive.

MSC to allow guest, Mitch Bowman, IWW, to speak.

- The Vancouver Branch of the IWW has been meeting at Spartacus Books, but are out growing the space. They are hoping for a donated union space for a dozen or so people on a monthly basis.

MSC to allow guest, John Yano, Vancouver Point Grey NDP, to speak.

- A townhall is being held around the issue of the housing tax for homes worth more than \$3 million, May 1, 7 pm at St. James Community Square – the event is sold out, primarily by very wealthy people who are opposed to the tax, anyone that would like to show up in support of affordable housing is welcome.

16. MEETING ADJOURNED: *MSC to adjourn at 9:13 pm.*

17. NEXT MEETING: **TUESDAY, MAY 15, 2018**, 7:30 pm,
Maritime Labour Centre.

Pizza Educational
Tuesday, May 15, 2018
6:00 pm

VOTE PR BC
Proportional Representation with Romeo Tello

For copies of posters for these events, please visit website – www.vdlc.ca

[For lists of happenings please see our website events page.](#)