



# VANCOUVER and DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL



## REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 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-Waututh, and other First Nations people.*

*The meeting was opened by students of Queen Alexandra Elementary School who performed some musical numbers for delegates and guests.*

**2. CHAIRPERSON:** 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Terry Engler

**3. ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:**

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

**4. CREDENTIALS:**

The following credentials were received since the last VDLC meeting:

(\* = recredentialled, A = alternate)

CUPW Local 846

Angelito Decena

Deanna Ho

Cristina MacLennan

Lisa Quattrocchi

Devan Ritchie

Yogesh Sharma

Adam Winterstein

Alvan Wu

FPSE Local 5

Seema Ahluwalia

*MSC to obligate/seat the delegate(s).*

**5. PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

President Stephen von Sychowski reported on VDLC activities since the November meeting.

Political Action

At the November meeting we voted to form a Municipal Engagement Committee (MEC) for Vancouver. A number of delegates have expressed interest. I have also notified our Expanded Political Action Committee (EPAC) about this and asked for volunteers and/or appointments. There has been quite a lot of interest already. The first meeting will take place in early 2019.

On December 12, I will be meeting with Lois Chan-Pedley and Michael Wiebe, the two Green Party of Vancouver candidates who were elected but not endorsed by us. The intent of the meeting is to establish a relationship and lines of communication with the two of them so

that we can work with them as well as the other progressive elected officials over the next four years.

#### VDLC Labour Education

“Investigations and Interrogations: Representing Members in Employer Interviews” on November 24 was a tremendous success. We had twenty-four participants and they provided exceptional feedback about the course in general, and the materials and facilitators in particular. There were several suggestions that we look at extending this to a two-day course next year.

We had a smaller turnout at our “Effective Grievances” on December 1, with fifteen participants. This course was also a success and feedback was positive.

The 2019 Program will be released this month and will include a school-type format featuring a variety of courses in May and November, as well as some stand-alone courses throughout the year. There will be no courses in January/February in order to avoid conflict with CLC Winter School.

#### BC Fed Convention

The BC Fed held its convention November 25 to 30. Over 1,000 delegates from affiliated unions were in attendance. Both President Irene Lanzinger and Secretary-Treasurer Aaron Ekman declined to stand for re-election. Laird Cronk from IBEW and Sussanne Skidmore from BCGEU were acclaimed to the roles of president and secretary-treasurer respectively. The convention also elected trustees and labour council representatives. It was VDLC’s turn in rotation to run a candidate for labour council representative on the executive council. In accordance with the motion passed at our October meeting, I ran for the position and was acclaimed.

The VDLC’s resolutions on softwood lumber, the BC government, and against hate and fascism were adopted by convention. The other resolutions we submitted did not get to the convention floor, as was the case with the majority of resolutions in-general. As such they were referred to the executive council to be dealt with at its first meeting.

#### Metro Vancouver Alliance

Myself, Bal, and Michelle Livaija attended the MVA leadership summit on November 24. The summit focused on goals for the next year, which are primarily aimed at strengthening the “roots” of the organization. This means building finances and membership, and bringing on a second organizer, so that the organization can continue the research, advocacy, and activism which has been its main focus in recent years. One feature of this is the launch of an individual donors campaign.

#### Young Workers Committee

The committee met on December 4 and is working on organizing another meeting currently. They are still working to get this committee fully back up on its feet but progress is being made.

Queen Alexandra Fundraiser

Our Queen Alexandra Fundraiser event is scheduled for January 17, 6 to 9 pm, at the Rio Theatre. We will be showing the film *The Road Forward*, about First Nations activism in Canada.

The event is now live on our website and has been shared to our lists and social media. Ticket sales are live as well. Please buy your tickets and help promote this event, especially by asking your affiliate to purchase a block of tickets.

Office Closure

Please note the office will be closed during the weeks of December 17 and 24. Happy holidays!

We will host our usual holiday social following the meeting tonight, so let's work hard to get through the agenda in a timely fashion.

Events Attended

November 20 – Meeting with Conni Kilfoil re: Labour Education Program  
November 21 – United Way of the Lower Mainland Labour Appreciation Dinner  
November 22 – Pharmacare Lobby with MP Terry Beach  
November 24 – Investigations and Interrogations course  
November 24 – Metro Vancouver Alliance leadership summit  
November 25 – BC Fed Credentials Committee meeting  
November 26 to 30 – BC Fed Convention  
November 28 – BC Cabinet and First Nations Leaders Gathering  
November 29 – CUPW Solidarity Rally  
December 1 – Effective Grievances course  
December 1 – CUPW Solidarity Rally  
December 4 – Young Workers Committee meeting  
December 5 – United Way of the Lower Mainland Campaign Cabinet Labour Committee  
December 6 – VDLC Executive  
December 7 – Meeting with Co-Facilitator David Flemming re: CLC Winter School  
December 7 – Day of Mourning Committee meeting  
December 7 – Pharmacare Lobby with MP Dan Ruimi  
December 9 – Speaking engagement at Unitarian Church of Vancouver  
December 11 – BC Poverty Reduction Coalition meeting  
December 11 – VDLC regular meeting

**6. CORRESPONDENCE:**     *Circulated at meeting.*

**7. EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS:**

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

Subject:     Spending Authorizations

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

- Co-Op Radio – Donation of \$100.00
- FACE (Feminist Association for Collaborative Education) for their event “Feminism Unbound: Resisting Fear and Exclusion in Our Movement” – Donation of \$100.00

- b) *MSC that the following recommendation, introduced November 15, 2018 as a Notice of Motion be adopted:*

Subject: Cascade Region Labour Leaders Institute

BECAUSE President Stephen von Sychowski has been invited to attend the Cascade Region Labour Leaders Institute (CRLLI) in 2019/2020; and

BECAUSE the CRLLI is an intensive leadership development program for union and community leaders from British Columbia, Washington and Oregon, the alumni of which contain some of British Columbia's most respected labour leaders; and

BECAUSE the program was attended by previous President Joey Hartman in 2014/2015, and sister Hartman reported that the Institute, which was then called the National Labor Leadership Initiative (NLLI), was a tremendous experience which substantially built upon her leadership skills and approach; and

BECAUSE the program is unique on several levels: it is leadership development for leaders, it's cross border - including both Canadian and American participants from our region, it explicitly values relationship building between labour and community leaders, and it provides support between three sessions spread out over eight months; and

BECAUSE the three sessions of the CRLLI are as follows:

- June 3 to 7, 2019 – Harrison Hot Springs, BC
- October 7 to 11, 2019 – Tacoma, WA
- February 3 to 7, 2020 – Portland, OR; and

BECAUSE the VDLC and the broader labour movement would benefit from President Stephen von Sychowski's participation in the CRLLI; and

BECAUSE the cost of the CRLLI is \$8,000 for labour organizations and includes room and board, but does not include transportation costs,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL consider the three retreats as working time, and to pay the registration fee of up to \$8,000 for brother von Sychowski with \$5,000 being budgeted for in 2019 and the remaining \$3,000 in 2020, to be budgeted through the Education fund for leadership development.

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

Subject: Against Homophobic "Task Force" in Tanzania

BECAUSE Paul Makonda, the regional governor of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania's former capital and most populous city, announced plans on October 29 of this year to form a task force to hunt down and arrest people who are, or are perceived to be, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or inter-sex; and

BECAUSE despite the public assurances of the government of Tanzania that nobody would be arrested due to their real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, ten people have been arrested on the Tanzanian island of Zanzibar on suspicion of being gay; and

BECAUSE those arrested may now be subject to cruel and inhumane examinations aimed at “proving” their sexual orientation; and

BECAUSE these arrests form part of an ongoing poor record on the part of the government of Tanzania, which has also included the raiding of public health organizations who provide services to men who have sex with men, and threats against human rights organizations including the arrest last year of two human rights activists on charges of “promoting homosexuality”; and

BECAUSE the government of Canada has an extensive relationship with that of Tanzania, including the provision of \$2.3 billion in development funding since the 1960’s,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL condemn the arrests and hate-mongering statements by government officials in Tanzania and demand full respect for human rights regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL FURTHER write to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau calling on the government of Canada to exert whatever pressure possible to end the persecution of LGBTQ+ people in Tanzania.

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

Subject: Landed Status Now

BECAUSE thousands of racialized women come to Canada every year to take care of Canadian families; and

BECAUSE by law, these workers are tied to our employers, making it almost impossible to leave a bad job or get a new job, all of which contributes to low wages and abuse; and

BECAUSE these care workers are separated from their families, often for 5 to 10 years, before they can apply for them to come to Canada. Many such applications are refused, and over 20,000 women are waiting to have their applications reviewed; and

BECAUSE the live-in caregiver program is set to expire on November 29, 2019, meaning that tens of thousands of care workers may become undocumented,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL support the Landed Status Now campaign, which calls for permanent residency status, family unity, and full rights for care workers; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL FURTHER write to Immigration Minister Ahmed Hussen in support of this campaign and its objectives, and call upon him and the federal government to act to ensure the rights of care workers are respected.

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

Subject: End Renovictions

BECAUSE the practice of renoviction has contributed substantially to the lack of affordable rental stock in the City of Vancouver and has caused displacement and homelessness; and

BECAUSE housing affordability was the number one issue of the recent municipal election, the new City Council must send a strong message by standing up for renters and for affordable housing; and

BECAUSE all City Councillors who sought VDLC endorsement during the election identified affordable housing and homelessness as key issues to them; and

BECAUSE City Councillor Jean Swanson, who was endorsed by the VDLC, introduced a motion titled “Protecting Tenants from Renovictions and Aggressive Buyouts” (<https://council.vancouver.ca/20181114/documents/pspc12-RevisedMotion.pdf>); and

BECAUSE this motion, with amendments, was passed unanimously at the December 4, 2018, meeting of City Council,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL write to Mayor Kennedy Stewart thanking and congratulating mayor and council for taking action on this issue; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL refer the issue of renovictions to the Municipal Engagement Committee so that it can monitor for further developments and actions that can be taken.

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

Subject: Land Value Capture Tax in the City of Vancouver

BECAUSE City Councillor Christine Boyle, who was endorsed by the VDLC, has introduced a motion titled “Land Value Capture in the City of Vancouver” ([https://council.vancouver.ca/20181204/documents/motionb5.pdf?fbclid=IwAR36FEvcAdEZ\\_UjKh0MI23QsXPciI4E\\_mdZnT-4uovRkPEJHOUuhd9SPdMU](https://council.vancouver.ca/20181204/documents/motionb5.pdf?fbclid=IwAR36FEvcAdEZ_UjKh0MI23QsXPciI4E_mdZnT-4uovRkPEJHOUuhd9SPdMU)); and

BECAUSE this motion asks the city to study how a land value capture tax could work in the City of Vancouver; and

BECAUSE a land value capture tax would help ensure that wealth created by rezoning a public infrastructure development is captured for public use; and

BECAUSE this would also assist dampening speculation; and

BECAUSE a land value capture tax is a key component of the AffordableBC plan, which the VDLC endorsed earlier this year and has promoted throughout the year,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL support the adoption of the motion “Land Value Capture in the City of Vancouver” by Vancouver City Council; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL refer the issue of a land value capture tax to the Municipal Engagement Committee so that it can monitor for further developments and actions that can be taken.

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

Subject: Repayment of Refugee Travel Loans

BECAUSE Canada continues to be one of the only countries in the world that charges refugees arriving in Canada the costs of their travel to get here. Within 30 days of arrival, refugees must start paying back their transportation costs; and

BECAUSE refugees coming to Canada are fleeing from war, civil strife, and/or political violence; many have fled their homes and countries and have been living in camps for years prior to being accepted to come to Canada; and arrive in Canada with little to nothing; and

BECAUSE eliminating interest charges and extending the repayment period before the loan becomes repayable will give resettled refugees more time to focus on their integration without needing to give immediate attention to loan repayments,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL will support the call by the Hospital Employees’ Union, and others, to eliminate interest charges and to extend the repayment period for the travel loan that the Canadian government charges refugees for the costs of their travel to get here.

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

Subject: Path to Permanent Residency for Agricultural Workers

BECAUSE agricultural workers are considered seasonal workers in Canada and therefore do not qualify to apply for permanent residency. However, due to changes in growing practices, specifically greenhouses, many of these workers are staying year-round, their work is no longer seasonal; and

BECAUSE even prior to the mass introduction of greenhouses, many agricultural workers have come to Canada each year for decades to harvest our food staying up to 8 months at a time; and

BECAUSE if these workers are good enough to harvest our food, pay taxes into our tax system (some that they will never be able to collect – EI, CPP), and contribute to our economy through their spending while here, then they should be allowed to apply for residency should they so wish; and

BECAUSE these workers do not take away jobs from those already in Canada. Their employers have already proven that they cannot hire enough local workers to harvest quickly enough; and

BECAUSE the rules for the Agricultural Worker Program were written over 50 years ago and it is time to change them,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL support the call by the Hospital Employees Union, and others, for changes to the Agricultural Worker Program to make it easier for these workers in Canada to apply for permanent residency.

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

Subject: Removing the One-Year Cap

BECAUSE when someone comes to Canada on a work visa, as a student, or as a refugee their time in Canada counts towards time to become a permanent resident and/or Canadian citizen. To become a citizen, it takes one full year (without leaving Canada) prior to becoming a permanent resident and then 2 more years (also without leaving Canada) once you have permanent residency status; and

BECAUSE due to backlogs and changes in governments, we have many non-permanent residents in Canada who have been working here and paying taxes here, some for almost a decade. Yet all those years of work only count for one year. Then when they receive permanent residency, they must work an additional two years to then qualify for citizenship,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL support the removal of the one-year cap that has been implemented when considering time in Canada for permanent residency and Canadian citizenship.

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

Subject: Support Postal Workers

BECAUSE the Federal government has adopted back to work legislation targeting the Canadian Union of Postal Workers; and

BECAUSE this legislation violates the right to strike and to free collective bargaining, and is a clear case of government intervention on behalf of the employer; and

BECAUSE there has been a tremendous and growing display of public support for postal workers, including community demonstrations, rallies, and other actions; and

BECAUSE six demonstrators in Halifax, Nova Scotia, were arrested and have been charged with “mischief” and “obstructing a peace officer” for participating in a peaceful protest and others have been arrested since in other cities,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL continue to support the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, however possible, until such time as they achieve a new collective agreement; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL follow up on its previous letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau with an additional letter condemning the back to work legislation and calling for respect of free collective bargaining and the right to strike; and



THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL express its solidarity with all those arrested and demand all charges against them be dropped and that the rights to peaceful protest and freedom of speech and assembly be respected.

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

Subject: 2019 VDLC Meeting Dates

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL hold its 2019 meetings starting at 7:30 pm on the third Tuesday of each month, except August and December, as follows:

- January 15
- February 19
- March 19
- April 16
- May 21
- June 18
- July 16
- (no August meeting)
- September 17
- October 15
- November 19
- December 10 (note a week earlier than normal and 7:00 pm start)

## **8. REPORT OF UNIONS:**

a) PSAC Local 20045 /UVAE – Reported by Shane Pollack

PSACs largest bargaining units in the Treasury Board of Canada groups have been in negotiations since the fall of 2017. They have been met with an employer who unwilling to negotiate. The last offer was for 0.75, 0.75, 0.75, and 0.75 for four year deal. The first two years of which would not be implemented retroactively, which is equal to a wage freeze which is unacceptable; this along with a list of other unreasonable offers. The bargaining teams have rejected these insulting demands and PSAC has declared an impasse and have called for a P.I.C. (public interest commission). If the P.I.C. yields little or no movement from the Treasury Board, the next step will be a strike vote. Members deserve a reasonable offer, they have been working under the lash of the Phoenix pay system, showing up for work underpaid, overpaid, or not paid correctly. The union is asking for the respect promised by when Trudeau said that they would be a government who respects workers.

PSAC is also in bargaining with separate employers: CRA, Border Services, and CFIA. All of the bargaining teams have met with an employer unwilling to table unreasonable offers. The union will be organizing rallies and strike votes will likely be taking place early 2019. PSAC asks for support at upcoming events. The VDLC will be kept abreast of the issue as it progresses.

b) HEU Dogwood Lodge Local – Reported by Karen McVeigh

On December 4, HEU Facilities Bargaining Association reached a 3 year tentative agreement, 2% a year and more. They will be voting on the agreement in the New Year.

c) CUPW Local 846, Vancouver – Reported by Nick Aubichon  
CUPW was legislated back to work after 5 weeks or rotating strikes and other job action. No further job action is allowed. CUPW and Canada Post Corporation could not agree on a mediator/arbitrator so the government appointed Elizabeth MacPherson, former Chair of the Canada Industrial Relations Board. After 7 days of mediation, with extensions available, it has gone to binding arbitration. The union has filed a constitutional challenge as the back to work legislation violates their right to collective bargain. Postal workers thanks everyone that came out in support; the solidarity will not be forgotten.

d) ILWU Local 400 – Reported by Jason Woods  
The union continues to exchange proposals with Mercedes Benz as they work towards their first collective agreement. More dates have been set for January.

Pacific/FMW bargaining unit travelled to Port Alberni to meet with the employer, however, the employer didn't show up.

Jason attended the International Boatmen's Union, 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in November; it was quite a militant crowd.

Transport Canada is slashing the safe minimum manning certificates for domestic tug boats: Canada already holds the world record low. They are reducing number required from 2 sailors to 1.

Local 400 has purchased 10 tickets to *The Road Forward*, the fundraiser at the Rio for Queen Alexandra Elementary. They encourage affiliates to do the same. Brother Woods saw the film at DOXA and it was very moving.

e) BCTF VESTA – Reported by Jody Polukoshko  
November 2016 saw the successful restoration of teachers' stripped collective agreement provisions on workload. There are still many issues with restoration; there are dozens of grievances – several victories through arbitration but lots of employer foot dragging, delaying satisfactory implementation. BCTF is set to begin negotiating at the end of January 2019 and are feeling hopeful about achieving a settlement. The government initiated a funding formula review in 2017. Initially BCTF was pleased because funding is insufficient; however, they were less than pleased once they found out that there was no intention to consult with teachers through the BCTF or other public education unions. Further, the union has learned plans were to remove funding attached to students with special needs. The government has been floating the idea of a prevalence model, which would remove funding from specific students who need additional support. This is a model that New Brunswick and Ontario has used and has been a colossal failure not only in terms of supports for students so that all students are provided the learning conditions they need, but also in terms of teacher workload. BCTF has pushed back by insisting that the public education system meet the needs of all students.

Jody encouraged everyone, if they have a relationship with their MLA, to please consider asking about the funding review. The union is expecting it to be released before the winter break.

- f) ILWU Local 500 – Reported by Antonio Bonamin  
In respect of the memory of Everett Cummings (ILWU Local 502) and Don Jantz (ILWU Local 500) and all other individuals who have sustained injuries in the workplace, ILWU Canada and the BC Marine Employers' Association respectfully ask that all workers observe a 5 minute moment of silence at 11:00 am on Wednesday, December 12, 2018. These deaths are a travesty, if not criminal. It is hoped that Employment and Social Development Canada will find these companies negligent and charge them accordingly.

Kill a worker – Go to jail.

*MSC to adopt the reports of unions.*

## **9. REPORT OF COMMITTEES:**

- a) Women's – Reported by Caitlin Davidson-King  
The VDLC Women's Committee awarded this year's scholarship for Winter School to Ruth Kirk. Ruth is a member of HEU.

IWD Dinner theme will be Women for Economic Justice, Taking on Poverty. Dinner will be at the Maritime Labour Centre March 8.

Reminder that the committee will be supporting the Tampon Tuesday campaign, delegates and guests are encouraged to bring products for donation.

*MSC to adopt the report of committees.*

## **OTHER REPORTS:**

- a) CLC – Reported by Ron Stipp  
Winter School is filling up, if anyone still has to register, registrations need to get in quickly.

Burnaby South By-election will be called in January. It is a very important by-election, as Jagmeet Singh will be running for the seat and needs to get elected to the house. If anyone has time to contribute to his campaign please do. It is through door-to-door work that the NDP will be able to hold that seat.

Federal election is gearing up. The working group has already started meeting. Liberals are working hard to recruit candidates. When we talk about the fight our brothers and sisters are mounting at CUPW and PSAC, it comes down to who forms government; the Liberals have proven they are no different than the Conservatives when it comes to labour relations.

- b) BC FORUM – Reported by Agnes Jackman  
The current issue of the Advocate is out, there is a focus on Pharmacare.
- c) Labour Day Planning – Reported by Stephen von Sychowski  
January 9, 2:00 pm the committee will be coming together to look at options for 2019. Notice of meeting has gone out to affiliates and those that were on the planning committee for 2018.

- d) May Day – Reported by Stephen von Sychowski  
Planning committee will be meeting in January as well, date not set.

*MSC to receive the other reports.*

**10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** Nil

**11. NEW BUSINESS:** Nil

**12. NOTICE OF MOTION:** Nil

**13. GOOD AND WELFARE:**

- 50/50 Proceeds to Queen Alexandra Wishing Tree free store.
- The card and gift sent to Brother Tim Cheung was received and he asked that his thanks and appreciation be sent on to the labour council. It meant a lot to him.

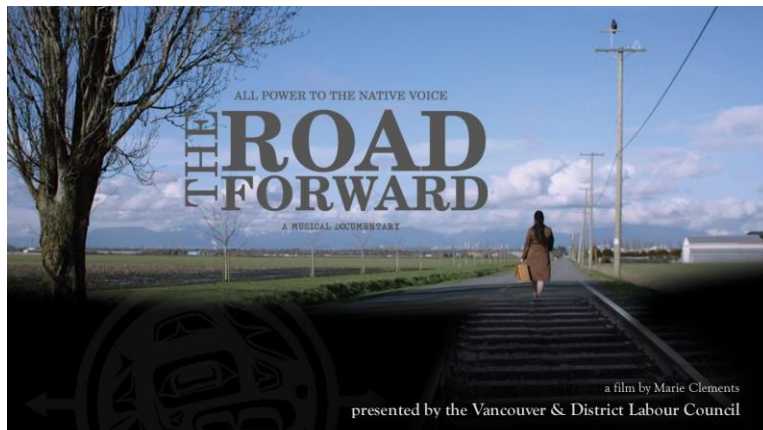
*Delegates were invited to stay behind after the meeting for a seasonal social.*

**14. MEETING ADJOURNED:** *MSC to adjourn at 9:00 pm.*

**15. NEXT MEETING:** **TUESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2019**, 7:30 pm,  
Maritime Labour Centre.

**Pizza Educational**  
**Community Health Centres**  
**Dr. John Calvert**

**6:00 pm**  
*Pizza and refreshment by donation*



To raise funds for Queen Alexandra Elementary School's Wishing Tree free store.

January 17, 2019

Doors 6:00 pm

Start 6:30 pm

Tickets \$ 20

(\$10.50 ticket / \$ 9.50 donation)

Ticket purchase via Eventbrite

link at: [vdlc.ca](http://vdlc.ca)

The Rio Theatre

1660 E. Broadway

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