

August 11, 2007

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## **What the City of Vancouver refuses to talk about: UNION ISSUES**

Unions exist in order to provide an organized and democratic way for workers to address issues that are important to them with their employer – rather than allow the employer to simply dictate to workers the terms and conditions of their employment.

Unions survey their members, draft a list of priority issues and present these issues to the employer at the bargaining table. The employer is supposed to “bargain” these issues with the union, balancing, matching and reconciling them to organizational and other goals. In the majority of cases, this results in a collective agreement that both parties find beneficial and can be proud of.

This is exactly what has happened in this 2006-2007 round of Lower Mainland civic bargaining. Everywhere, except in Vancouver, employers have come to the table with a genuine desire to bargain issues and reach a conclusion.

The problem in Vancouver is that the city negotiators, along with their GVRD Labour Relations Bureau negotiators, categorically REFUSE to address the issues that have been identified as important by their civic and library workers.

The city’s “take it or strike” attitude is what has placed CUPE civic and library workers on strike and will continue to deny residents vital civic services for goodness knows how long.

In the meantime, we would like to familiarize you with the issues that have been identified by your civic and library workers as vital to their working lives and the continual provision of quality public services.

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### **CUPE 15 (Vancouver’s 2,500 inside workers)**

On strike since: Monday, July 23, 2007

*Primary issue is job security. Others include improvements for auxiliaries, benefit improvements, whistleblower protection and harassment resolution language.*

[July 28, 2007: scroll down for clear description and explanation of CUPE 15 issues](#)

July 13, 2007: list of [employer mean-spirited takeaway demands rejected by members](#) in final offer vote, but still being put forward by the City of Vancouver at table today, despite the fact that members voted it down by 89 per cent.

**For CUPE comment: CUPE 15 President, Paul Faoro, c: 604-202-1829**

### **CUPE 391 (Vancouver's 800 library workers)**

On strike since: Thursday, July 26, 2007

*Primary issue is pay equity. VLP librarians are paid \$7 an hour less than librarians in larger Ontario cities who have addressed pay equity. Other important issues include improvements for part-time & auxiliary workers, benefit improvements & job security - on heels of closure of Bindery.*

Detailed [CUPE research report on pay equity](#), provided to Vancouver Public Library Board at bargaining table and at presentations to the Board.

[CUPE 391 Bargaining blog](#) – great resources, information and videos.

[City of Burnaby negotiates pay equity for library workers](#). GVRD Labour Relations Bureau ratifies Wednesday, August 8, 2007. Why can't Vancouver library workers have the same?

Simon Fraser University [Professor Marjorie Griffin Cohen states that British Columbia is the only province lacking pay equity legislation](#), forcing workers to address this vital equity issue at bargaining tables.

**For CUPE comment: CUPE 391 President, Alex Youngberg, c: 604-908-6095**

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### **CUPE 1004 (Vancouver's 2000 outside workers)**

On strike since: Friday, July 20, 2007

*Primary issue is skilled trades adjustments and improvements to address exodus of skilled trades workers, benefit improvements and whistleblower protection.*

See the following press releases and public statements for more information.

[July 17, 2007: City of Vancouver fails again to bargain, forcing civic worker strike](#)

[July 16, 2007: Major issues unresolved as CUPE 1004 files strike notice](#)

[June 22, 2007: Vancouver outside workers vote 96 percent in favour of strike action](#)

**For CUPE comment: CUPE 1004 President Mike Jackson, c: 778-908-8070**

Friday, August 10, 2007 rally at Vancouver City Hall, CUPE local presidents spoke to the above issues. [View video here](#)