

CUPE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

December 2016

Our National Executive Board met December 13-15, 2016 in Ottawa. These are the highlights of their deliberations and decisions.

In Memory

The National Executive Board (NEB) observed a minute of silence to reflect upon the loss of members in our CUPE family. The following sisters and brothers were remembered: Nicole LeBlanc, Local 25; Earl Zaroski, retired, Local 4000; Enza Commisso, Local 973; Richard Small, Local 1310; Dan Boon, Local 1310; Michele Dick, Local 7575; Thomas “Tom” McGovern, Local 416; Helen Daniel, Local 3396; Joanne Neepin, Local 5021; Julie Salmon, Local 8443; Patricia McKenzie, Local 4728; Doug McNicol, retired, Local 1004; Saturnino Sonson, Local 30, workplace fatality; and Egon Keist, retired staff member.

2017 Budget

After extensive consultations with Regional Directors and elected leaders from each region, the 2017 General Fund and Defense Fund budgets were adopted unanimously at the December NEB. Due to a slow down in revenue growth, the 2017 General Fund budget provides increases where required, and otherwise maintains expenditures in keeping with inflation. Thanks to the decision taken at our last National Convention, our National Defence Fund now receives a larger portion of per capita revenues. In 2017, these resources have been allocated to increased funding for local campaigns, organizing, and National Strategic initiatives as directed by National Convention.

NEB Policy – Collective Bargaining

We have seen a sharp rise in the number of employers seeking concessions and the introduction of two-tier provisions in our collective agreements. Governments of all stripes are restructuring the services our members provide and looking for more ways to privatize those same services.

We recognize that CUPE is at its strongest when we all work together. Our ability to defend collective bargaining rights, resist concessions and two-tier proposals, and move forward can only be accomplished when the National Officers, National Executive Board, chartered organizations, staff, and local leaders work together to ensure the best possible outcomes for our members.

With this in mind, the NEB adopted a revised policy on collective bargaining that sets out a plan to ensure CUPE locals and members are fully prepared to fight back against attacks during bargaining. Watch for more details in coming weeks.

Pension Legislation

CUPE pension researcher Mark Janson joined the NEB to discuss two pieces of federal legislation related to pensions. C-26 implements the CPP expansion, but neglects to apply the expansion for child-rearing and disability “drop out” periods. C-27, legislation previously contemplated by Stephen Harper’s government, would allow federally-regulated employers to retroactively change a defined benefit pension plan into a less-secure “target benefit” plan.

While C-26 passed into law without changes, we will continue to pressure the federal government and the provinces to correct the legislation before the CPP expansion comes into force in 2019. C-27 has not yet been debated in the House of Commons, and CUPE is actively campaigning against the Bill. More information is available at <http://cupe.ca/pensions>.

Special Strike Support

Being on the picket line during the holiday season is especially difficult for our members. In recognition of this, the NEB passed a motion to provide special strike support of \$300 for each member of Local 2974 (Essex Library) and Local 4914 (Peel Children’s Aid Society).

Disaster Relief

CUPE National raised a total of \$204,820 from chartered organizations in the wake of the spring 2016 wildfires in northern Alberta. Thanks to the generosity of CUPE members across Canada, donations of \$51,205 were made to four local community groups in Fort McMurray and surrounding communities: Stepping Stone Youth Home; Pastew Place Detoxification Centre; Unity House; and Wood Buffalo Food Bank.

The NEB also supported a donation of \$10,000 to the United Way Cape Breton Region to assist the communities affected by the devastating floods of October 2016.

Financial Support

The National Executive Board approved 10 cost-share campaign requests totaling \$668,335.05, and nine requests for legal support totaling \$520,032.69.