



Board of Directors' Report



MGEU Board of Directors 2021

Board of Directors' Report September 7, 2021

The MGEU Board of Directors is responsible for carrying out decisions made at Convention and administering the Union between Conventions (Article 23.3).

The following is a summary of the broader issues the Board faced and activities our Union undertook to best serve our membership since the 2018 Convention.

RAISING OUR VOICES AGAINST CUTS AND PRIVATIZATION

A month after the last MGEU Convention, a media report surfaced showing that since their election in 2016, the Pallister government had spent more than \$16 million on 20 different studies done by private consultants. A few weeks later, in the Winnipeg Free Press, the Premier accused the MGEU of focusing too much on "attack" ads.

These moments foretold what was to come.

Within the next few months, the government moved to:

- press forward with health care cuts and restructuring;
- privatize the Churchill Liquor Mart and Pineland provincial nursery and parts of MB Infrastructure and MB Housing;
- close Selkirk Laundry and several beds at Milner Ridge Correctional Facility;
- cut youth addictions programming in Portage and vacant positions at the MB Agricultural Services Corporation.

The onslaught of cuts, privatization, and restructuring continued aggressively from there.

To give members a voice and ensure Manitobans understood what was at stake:

- We made **active, persistent use of earned media**. The President continued to speak out in the news, both in Winnipeg and around the province, often several times about several issues in one week. In the case of Selkirk Laundry, members and supporters rallied in front of the Selkirk MLA's office to express their concern and demand some answers.
- We began encouraging members and their supporters to **Send a Message online to elected officials in protest of the government's actions**. In the case of Pineland, a sign containing 1,500 names of those who emailed in a petition to save our public tree nursery was hand-delivered to the Minister of Sustainable Development.
- We launched **People Behind the Public**, a TV and online ad campaign that showed MGEU members delivering a wide-range of vital public services and highlighted how Manitobans' priorities were no longer being reflected in government actions.
- **Privatization of Liquor Sales**
By the spring of 2019, it was clear that the government would also be further privatizing liquor sales across the province. In response, we launched Keeping Liquor Public, a radio and online ad campaign about the benefits of keeping sales public. For instance, our ads pointed out that \$280 million in profits every year generated by Liquor Marts are invested back into public services, like schools, hospitals, and roads (not funneled to rich, out-of-province shareholders).

Throughout the campaign, thousands of members and supporters of public liquor sales signed our petition, registered to speak at legislative committees and wrote, called, or met with their MLAs. All were key to our success in getting the newly sworn-in Premier to back down from pushing forward with Bill 40.

○ **Bill 29 Union Representation Votes**

Throughout the summer of 2019, as policy decisions continued to target more and more of our members, the government's health care bargaining unit restructuring plan pit unions and union members against each other during the government's restriction of our health care system.

After months of calling out the futility of such a vote, and left with no choice but to participate, we committed tremendous time, energy, and resources to creating messaging and fanning out teams of members and staff across the province to meet with fellow health care workers.

Over two months, teams visited dozens and dozens of worksites in Winnipeg, Brandon, Dauphin, Swan River, Killarney, Deloraine, Gilbert Plains, Grandview, Steinbach, Morris, Ashern, Lundar, Eriksdale, Whitemouth, Pinawa, Lac Du Bonnet, Teulon, Fisher Branch, Minnedosa, Gladstone, Neepawa, Beausejour, Pine Falls, Morden, Winkler, Oakbank, Portage La Prairie, Roblin, Steinbach, Selkirk, The Pas and more across the province.

We listened hard to our members and made them our voice during the campaign. We believed our record stood for itself and as always, took the high road.

In the end, we were happy to continue to represent several Locals, including Interlake-Eastern Community Support, Interlake-Eastern Facility Support, Interlake-Eastern Technical- Professional, Prairie Mountain Community Support, and Prairie Mountain Facility Support, as well as welcoming a number of new Locals. At the same time, we had to say goodbye to 7,900 members – a tough loss for everyone in the MGEU.

○ **Introduction of the “Public Service Act”**

While we were trying to catch our breath, in December 2019, the government introduced new legislation which will eliminate provisions in the Civil Service Act for settling bargaining disputes through the appointment of an arbitration board, and the establishment of a Joint Council.

In response, we immediately made it clear through the media that at a time when the government is trampling on Civil Service members' collective bargaining rights, the need for our Union to have access to an arbitration panel – an independent third party – to reach a fair contract couldn't be more clear, while the Joint Council has been an extremely important way to open lines of communication between the government and their Civil Service employees (the government subsequently cancelled all future Joint Council meetings).

In the wake of this announcement, and with more than 2,000 Civil Service jobs cut in the previous three years, we began running the “People Behind the Public” campaign again, reminding Manitobans that the services they rely on every day can't happen without the people to deliver them.

The Public Service Act has now been passed by the Legislature, but has not received Royal Assent. With Pallister's resignation and a new Premier in office, we will continue to push for them to reconsider these legislative changes.

○ **Further Privatization of MI and VEMA**

In February 2020, the Union held a media conference to showcase mounting evidence that the government was planning to privatize Manitoba's snow clearing. We highlighted an Ontario Auditor General's report critical of their province's disastrous experience with private snow clearing services. We also partnered with the *Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (MB)* to survey our Manitoba Infrastructure and Vehicle and Equipment and Management Agency members and in August 2021, released *Hard Infrastructure, Hard Times*, a report detailing the serious safety and financial risks further privatization of these departments pose to Manitobans. We will continue building the case against infrastructure privatization.

- **Closure of Dauphin Correctional Centre**

In January 2020, when the government announced that rather than building a new facility and healing centre as promised, it would be closing the Dauphin Correctional Centre, we immediately organized our members and the community to try and reverse the decision. Over 600 people attended a march and rally in Dauphin and dozens of MGEU Correctional Officers and community members picketed the Legislature before attending the Legislative session to present a petition with nearly 6,000 signatures. While the community supported our efforts, the government refused to listen.

- **COVID Lockdown and Layoffs**

When we found ourselves in the midst of the pandemic crisis, our Union went into overdrive, striving to protect jobs, services, and members as the world around us changed by the day.

We negotiated Memorandums of Agreement with employers that minimized layoffs and the impact of workload reductions at several Locals, including MPI and Assiniboine Community College, while also advocating for redeployment of workers instead of layoffs at others, including Liquor and Lotteries and the wider Civil Service.

The Union also spoke out publicly, loudly and often, to ensure our members voices were heard during the crisis.

When the Premier began going public with threats of significant layoffs of “non-essential” civil servants and dire cuts to budgets, the MGEU and others repeatedly challenged him in the media, calling mass layoffs and cuts wrong for Manitoba families who count on our public services, wrong for our members working on the front lines and behind the scenes to keep our province running, and wrong for our already struggling economy.

In spring 2020, we also launched a province-wide radio and online ad campaign to remind Manitobans to stay home while profiling the services MGEU members continued to deliver on the frontlines and behind the scenes during the lockdown. For National Public Services Week, we created window signs as a way for MGEU members, family, and supporters to show their thanks and asked members to send in a physically distanced group photo or selfie in their PPE. Thanks to all who took the time to share their pandemic work day with their Union!

In the end, the Premier backed down from his plan for mass layoffs and after hearing from members and consulting with the Civil Service Component Directors, the Union achieved a no layoff clause in exchange for five unpaid days in 2021.

- **New Normal, Same Struggles**

As a result of high vacancy rates and crushing caseloads due to the ongoing pandemic, we went public with the plight of Medical Examiner Investigators and Lab Technologists, pushing until more support was hired to relieve some of the pressure on our members.

Since the beginning of 2021, we’ve begun to speak out about the impact of further wide-ranging workforce shortages, including a dangerous lack of Public Health Inspectors, Conservation Officers, and Motor Carrier Enforcement Officers.

In spring 2021, we also partnered with the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (MB) and launched an online campaign and petition to help our members and other Manitobans make their voices heard: our parks are for people, not profit – stop privatizing our Provincial parks! Manitoba parks are NOT for sale!

STANDING UP FOR MEMBERS EVERY DAY

- **Risks to our members’ safety and health**

- Liquor Mart Thefts

With the incidence of Liquor Mart thefts on the rise, the safety of MGEU members working in these stores was already an issue at our last Convention.

For months, we met with the employer, spoke out on the issue to media at every opportunity, and began to make some progress with the hiring of special duty police officers and secure entrances. The crisis only grew, however, as the thefts became violent. After a young member was injured in an attack, dozens of GOLICO activists attended question period at the Legislative building and shared with MLAs their first-hand accounts of the security crisis and what must be done to finally bring about real change. The next week, we held a news conference with the young member who was injured, and appealed to the Province to bring together key players in our community -- law enforcement, addictions, and social services, public and private retailers, unions, and the Province -- for an urgent summit.

Not long after, we joined other stakeholders at the newly established Manitoba Retail Crime Roundtable and by early 2020, Winnipeg Liquor Marts were installing secure entrances and requiring photo ID to enter the stores.

The situation quickly stabilized -- thefts in Winnipeg decreased from over 400 per month to under 10!

While secure entrances are now being added to the Liquor Marts in Flin Flon and The Pas, there is more to do across the province and we will continue to be vigilant on this critical safety issue.

- The Meth Crisis

At the same time, the meth crisis in Manitoba was affecting MGEU members in almost every component across the province. We publicly pushed for increased training for Paramedics and Remand Officers and better security measures in EIA offices. In July 2019, we called on the Premier and his government to come up with a comprehensive plan to address the meth crisis head on. Manitobans are still waiting.

- COVID-19 Risks

From the moment the pandemic took hold in Manitoba, the MGEU began advocating that all members' employers should:

- suspend the requirement for routine medical notes when employees self-identify as sick;
- maximize physical distancing in the workplace and promote work-from-home arrangements whenever possible;
- develop contingency plans for those who must self-isolate, including appropriate paid leave provisions;
- take steps to provide hand-washing facilities and alcohol-based hand cleaners.

As the pandemic and this work continued, a number of on-the-job safety issues arose that required advocacy both through public pressure and behind the scenes negotiations, including fighting for:

- adequate PPE for our Correctional Officers, Paramedics, Home Care Attendants, Health Care Aides, Housekeeping and Dietary Aides, and Liquor Mart workers;
- better access to vaccines for our rural members.

To date, we've also delivered well over 15,000 reusable MGEU-branded masks and thousands of bottles of hand sanitizer to our members across the province.

- Workplace Mental Health

In the fall of 2019, in response to a resolution endorsed by members at the 2018 Convention, the MGEU pulled together a working group of members and staff with particular expertise or interest in workplace mental health. After months of planning and a slight delay due to pandemic lockdowns, they launched a multi-year, multi-pronged campaign called Healthy Minds at Work in October 2020, aiming to engage members around workplace mental health by:

- raising awareness of mental health as a workplace issue;
- helping members have conversations about mental health;

- connecting members with mental health resources and supports;
- providing members with tools and information to advocate for more psychologically healthy workplaces.

Thanks to all who:

- participated in Wear Red Wednesdays (the first Wednesday of each month) to make the connection between work and mental health and get the conversation going;
- visited <https://www.healthymindsatwork.ca/> to watch or share any Healthy Minds at Work videos;
- supported workplace mental health programming through their donation to an MGEU Ride Don't Hide team (the Union matched all funds raised);
- took part in any "Time to Connect" webinars.

Despite restrictions due to COVID, the Healthy Minds at Work working group laid a solid foundation from which to build in the coming months and years.

- **Ongoing Systemic Challenges in Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Services (WFPS)**

In May 2021, after years of speaking out in the media about the toxic workplace culture at WFPS, we released a survey of our Local 911 members that showed bullying and harassment are prevalent. With Chief Lane announcing his retirement, we called on the City to pursue a whole new approach to the highly problematic WFPS.

- **Ongoing Underfunding of Community-Based Social Services**

In spring 2021, the MGEU and UFCW launched a joint ad campaign in support of frontline workers who are there 24-7 for our most vulnerable Manitobans. Like *People Behind the Public*, it featured TV and online ads and a web page with an opportunity to send a message: *It's more than just a job. It's about making vital, personal connections. But government under-funding has resulted in low pay, limited resources, and constant turnover.*

STRIVING TO ACHIEVE THE BEST DEALS POSSIBLE

- **Legal Victories and Appeals**

Since our last Convention, the government has flagrantly denied thousands of MGEU members of their rights according to the Constitution of Rights and Freedoms and the Civil Service Act. In response, we pursued the only option left to us to challenge an employer who is also the government – we challenged them in a court of law – and won every time.

- Bill 28 Challenge

The Partnership to Defend Public Services (led by the MB Federation of Labour in partnership with the MGEU and other public sector unions, and often referred to as the PDPS) mounted their constitutional challenge of the government's wage freeze legislation in court on November 18, 2019.

The MGEU President and several staff joined MFL President Kevin Rebeck, other labour leaders, economists, and labour relations experts to testify on the stand.

On June 11 2021, the Court of Queen's Bench ruled in favour of public sector workers and their unions, agreeing that Bill 28 violated members' rights under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

On August 17, 2020, the Pallister government announced it would be appealing the judge's decision. They had until January 2021 to submit supporting documentation for an appeal and the PDPS then had 30 days to file material in response.

On June 2, 2021, the Court heard from both sides in the Appeal hearing. The PDPS legal counsel made the case, once again, that the Public Services Sustainability Act (Bill 28) is unconstitutional, as it denies public sector workers of their Charter rights to sit down and negotiate fair wage increases with their employer.

The courts have set dates in November 2021 for the second part of the Court of Queen's Bench trial, where they will determine any additional remedies that go beyond having Bill 28 struck down. A ruling on the appeal is expected before the end of the year.

We will continue to stand up for our members' right to free and fair bargaining.

- **Civil Service Arbitration**

With the expiration of the Civil Service agreement at the end of March 2019, the Civil Service Bargaining Committee began negotiations with the Province in good faith. Almost immediately, however, these negotiations were frustrated by the government's refusal to discuss wages and benefits and their unwillingness to be up front about whether or not they intended to table the wage freezes contained in Bill 28.

By August, the Bargaining Committee felt compelled to file for arbitration on behalf of over 10,000 Civil Service members, believing that an independent, third party arbitration panel would provide a fair outcome, setting aside the Province's unproclaimed legislation.

After filing for arbitration, the MGEU began working with legal counsel to prepare our presentation – until the government refused to appoint an arbitration board.

As a result, the Union was back in the Court of Queen's Bench, arguing for our members' rights to have an interest arbitration board appointed to determine the terms and conditions of the next Civil Service collective agreement. In April 2020, the judge ruled in our favour and shortly after, the government appealed.

The Union and government made their cases to the Court of Appeal in December 2020, and once again, the court ruled in our favour. In the decision, the Minister's appeal was dismissed, the court order to appoint an arbitration board was confirmed, and the Minister was ordered to pay court costs to the MGEU.

The Civil Service arbitration hearing is scheduled in September 2021.

Civil servants will get a fair hearing in the determination of their next contract.

- **Ratifications**

Bargaining units not covered by Bill 28 have reached agreements based on their funding levels and circumstances. Generally, they've sought to maximize non-monetary gains and many have been successful in negotiating modest wage increases and other benefits.

Since the fall of 2018,

- 50 bargaining units ratified new collective agreements;
- Five were first contracts;
- Seven were achieved with the aid of a conciliator.

- **Strike Votes**

In January 2019, the Nisichawayasihk PCH – Local 367 Bargaining Committee received a resounding strike mandate from their membership before returning to the table to reach an agreement.

Members of the MGEU Health Care Support Services and Community Support Components in Interlake Eastern RHA and Prairie Mountain Health voted overwhelmingly to give their Bargaining Committees a strike mandate in August 2021.

○ **Arbitration**

In July 2019, as one of the only MGEU Locals that have access to interest arbitration through their collective agreement, members of the Macdonald Youth Services (Alternative Parent Home Program) - Local 369 were awarded wage increases in each year of their two-year contract by an arbitrator.

Members of the Corrections Component of the Civil Service rejected the employers' sub-agreement offer in August 2021 and will be applying for arbitration at the earliest opportunity.

ENGAGING IN TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION WITH MEMBERS

Since last Convention, we have continued to ensure members have an opportunity to remain up-to-date on their Union's latest activities through the eNews emailed to workplace reps at the end of each week and the President' 5-Minute Update continues to be emailed to all members and posted on workplace bulletin boards at the beginning of each month. Regular bargaining updates and issue-specific emails also go out via Mailchimp software to targeted Locals and Components.

Given the government's ongoing attack on public services, the Union has made a special effort to regularly profile the varied and vital work of MGEU members on MGEU.ca, including:

- Kerri Smith, Support Worker, Main Street Project - Local 136
- Amanda MacBeth, Crisis Worker, Southern Technical Professional - Local 420
- Katie Holness, Home Care Attendant, Prairie Mountain Community Support - Local 402
- Lindsay Friesen, Medical Examiner Investigator, Health (Area 7) – Local 20
- Harsimran Singh, Protective Services Officer, Civil Service Trades - Local 54
- Alex Anderson, Macdonald Youth Services Coach Program- Local 453
- Simran Badhan, Bail Worker, The Elizabeth Fry Society (MB) - Local 301
- Rustam Dow, HIFIS Specialist, End Homelessness Wpg – Local 439

○ **Message Sharing**

The Union has increasingly used social media (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter) to engage members and supporters in our advocacy efforts. Despite pandemic restrictions, we were able to rally support online by encouraging Manitobans to have their say and Send a Message to government. Since last Convention, thousands upon thousands of petition emails have been sent on behalf of Locals as small as the Churchill Liquor Mart to as large as the entire Civil Service. During the first pandemic lockdown, members were also able to petition the Premier to top-up employment insurance benefits for those laid off and to provide presumptive Workers' Compensation coverage for all Manitoba workers who become infected with COVID-19 through the course of their employment.

In January 2020, the MGEU President wrote a blog about the Pallister government's attack on rural Manitoba and encouraged members to share with the Premier (premier@leg.gov.mb.ca) their story about how provincial cuts are impacting their families and communities.

○ **Outreach**

Every two years, our President hosts Activist Appreciation Dinners in communities throughout the province and visits our members' workplaces so they can share directly any of their thoughts, ideas or concerns. In late 2018, 2019 and early 2020, members working for Manitoba Infrastructure and the Vehicle Equipment Management Agency, Liquor Marts, Correctional Centres, Provincial Buildings, Home Care, Emergency Medical Services, Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation and Addictions Foundation had the opportunity to meet with MGEU leadership in their worksites.

In the fall of 2019, the Union celebrated “National Public Service Week” by hosting special member events in Winnipeg, Steinbach, Selkirk, Portage, Dauphin, Brandon, Thompson, and The Pas. While in the neighbourhood, our President also took the opportunity to visit as many worksites as possible.

Meanwhile, earlier in the summer, the MGEU’s GOLICO Executive toured dozens of MBLL workplaces to talk with members about the many issues facing the Component, including Liquor Mart thefts and the threat of privatization.

Unfortunately, since March 2020, these in-person outreach activities have been severely limited due to health restrictions.

o **COVID Communications**

In the early days of the pandemic, MGEU members found themselves faced with a number of different challenges. Some were suddenly working from home. Others were heading into work with strict new rules and protocols in place, striving to navigate the risks of remaining on the job. Some were temporarily laid off, worrying about when they might see another pay cheque.

In response, the Union created (and continues to update) a special section on our website for all emerging COVID-19 related news that could impact MGEU members or their work.

Members were encouraged to reach out with their questions and concerns and in those first few months, we fielded thousands of calls, emails, and messages.

In July 2020, the Union also conducted a phone survey of how our members are currently using technology. The results helped to inform some of how we adapted Union business under new public health restrictions.

OFFERING MORE MANITOBANS THE BENEFITS OF UNION MEMBERSHIP

The MGEU believes in the principles of building the labour movement and increasing union density. Since the 2018 Convention, we organized five new locals, bringing our total number of Locals to 202.

o **New Labour Certificates since Oct 2018**

Local 450	CFS Western Manitoba EPR	11 members
Local 451	Patient Transport Services	81 members
Local 453	Macdonald Youth Services Coach Program	22 members
Local 454	Municipality of WestLake Gladstone	22 members
Local 457	Manitoba Ombudsman	17 members

ADAPTING AS AN ORGANIZATION

o **Pandemic Pivots**

As public health orders evolved rapidly during the pandemic, the MGEU office adapted the way we work to ensure the job got done while keeping safety a priority.

During periods of lockdowns, few restrictions, and everything in between, the MGEU Resource Centre remained open to take calls and emails from members, ensure members had ready access to appropriate staff, and triage any needs to visit the MGEU office. We also quickly pivoted to adopt new technologies to ensure Union business could continue.

As a range of pandemic-related issues emerged in our Locals -- from temporary layoffs to working from home protocols to the need for child care or COVID testing -- MGEU staff quickly adapted to virtually connecting with both members and employers, ensuring services continued uninterrupted.

In April 2020, the MGEU Board of Directors announced its decision to reschedule the 2020 MGEU Convention and related meetings due to the restrictions and uncertainty posed by the pandemic.

In July, when pandemic conditions had improved and public health restrictions were eased, the Board attempted to proceed with the Convention process by holding Local meetings to elect Convention delegates, pass Convention resolutions, and hold Local table officer elections.

Unfortunately, before these meetings could even begin, the resurgence of COVID-19 cases in Manitoba required their cancellation.

Given this experience and ongoing uncertainty about how the pandemic would impact meetings and gatherings, the Board directed staff to develop options for proceeding with Convention and related meetings and elections using remote technologies.

At its November 2020 meeting, the Board adopted a plan to hold a two-day Convention in October 2021 using remote (virtual) technologies. Area Council and Component Executive election meetings to fill Area Director, Component Director, and Standing Committee positions would be held using remote technology during the three weeks following Convention. Convention delegates and other Local positions were elected at meetings held remotely in spring 2021.

Between April and June, the Union held 256 virtual Local meetings, over the course of which MGEU members managed to elect:

- 303 Local Presidents, Chief Stewards, Vice-Presidents, and Members at Large;
- more than 200 stewards and health and safety reps; as well as
- 237 Convention delegates.

A compilation of Board decisions to adapt our Constitutional processes to pandemic risks and restrictions is included at the end of this report.

o **Staffing**

The last three years have been ones of change and challenge for MGEU staff. We had to make some very difficult decisions when it came to realigning our workforce based on membership, while at the same time many long-time staff were retiring.

We would like to acknowledge the many contributions of all our dedicated staff members who have retired, or moved on since our last Convention:

- Elise Altham
- Darlene Arnott
- Steve Ash-Hamon
- Allan Beach
- Christina Bielski
- Lorraine Clark
- Scott Cloney
- Jarett Danyluk
- Anita Darvill
- Darren Darvill
- Graham Dowdell
- Ed Dufour
- Linda Gebhardt
- Marlene Hubert
- Sandy Ironside
- Anoria Kaka
- David Lewis
- Diane Mark
- Kristine McCallum
- Felix Meza
- Joanne Mitchell
- Bonny Neal
- Erin O'Hara
- Serina Pottinger
- Karla Steele
- Paula Raposo
- Mike Ratcliffe
- Marielle Rulloda
- Gwen Suprovich
- Mike Sutherland
- Joël Tétreault
- Martin Trudel
- Russ Tychonick
- Cathy Woods

We'd also like to welcome the new faces who've joined us here at MGEU:

- Darren Bartel, IT Helpdesk/Database Technician
- Katie Haig-Anderson, Staff Representative
- Allison Long, Staff Representative
- Paul McDonald, Legal Counsel
- Tracey Mendrun, Staff Representative
- Julia Sanderson, Staff Representative
- Richard Van Grol, Staff Representative
- Amy Warnar-Brown, Staff Representative

ENGAGING WITH THE WIDER COMMUNITY

○ **Recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)**

Over the past couple of years, the Union has begun increasingly considering the TRC recommendations in how we train our staff and elected leadership, and speaking out publicly in support of the recommendations and related matters.

Building on earlier workshops for Board and staff on the TRC, MGEU staff participated in a day-long workshop that included a Blanket Exercise (the interactive educational tool that teaches the history of indigenous peoples in Canada), sharing circle, and guided tour of Kent Monkman's Shame and Prejudice exhibit at the Winnipeg Art Gallery – Local 150. On September 30, 2020, our part-time Indigenous Liaison Officer lined the hallways of the MGEU head office in Winnipeg with the names of children who died at residential schools.

As part of our commitment to being a partner in recognizing the historic injustices imposed upon Indigenous people and acknowledging the hurtful legacy of residential schools, we've also promoted Orange Shirt day with staff and membership and called on all Members of Parliament to support Bill C-5 and declare September 30 a statutory holiday.

○ **Local Events**

The MGEU remains committed to the communities where our members live and work. Before public health restrictions prevented us from doing so, we were pleased to be a part of the following events:

- 1919 Solidarity Parade May 2019
- Manitoba Museum Member Event May 2019
- Winnipeg Pride Parade June 2019
- Filipino Street Festival June 2019
- National Indigenous Day at the Forks June 2019
- Labour Day Picnic September 2019
- Paramedicine Across Canada Expo September 2019
- St. Amant Free the Spirit Festival September 2019
- Winnipeg Santa Claus Parade November 2018 and 2019

SOLIDARITY WITH THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

○ **The Manitoba Health Coalition**

The MGEU Strategic Plan recognizes the importance of developing allies through coalition building. In 2018, we joined other unions, community groups, and supportive Manitobans to re-establish a Manitoba Health Coalition (MHC).

The MHC has become a progressive voice for public, universal, quality health care in our province at a time when it has been threatened by short-sighted cuts and privatization. The Importance of standing up for these principles has never been more important than during the pandemic, when everything from lab testing, paramedicine, long-term care, home care, and other health services in our acute care facilities and communities have been stretched to their limits.

○ **Manitoba Federation of Labour (MFL)**

Over the last few years, we were grateful for the strong leadership role of the MFL in our legal fight – and subsequent victory -- against Bill 28.

We were also pleased to support and promote MFL efforts to fight back against Bill 16, which would significantly change collective bargaining rules in Manitoba and tip the scales against workers and unions, and Bill 64, which would remove local democratic oversight of our public education system. Together, we made sure Manitobans understood what these Bills were really about, resulting in enough public opposition for the newly sworn in Premier to delay any further discussion until the new Legislative session.

Meanwhile, collective leverage of the MFL has continued to grow since 2018. Recently, we were happy to write a message articulating the many benefits of MFL membership to the Manitoba Teachers' Society, who, along the Manitoba Nurses Union, are now official MFL affiliates.

○ **National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE)**

In June 2019, the MGEU was pleased to host delegates to our National Union's annual Convention during the General Strike centennial.

Throughout the pandemic, NUPGE's leadership in sharing information and experiences with our affiliated unions in other provinces helped us with our own planning and created opportunities for joint problem-solving during an incredibly busy and trying time for all of us.

○ **Canadian Labour Congress**

In June 2021, more MGEU delegates than ever before were able to attend the first-ever virtual CLC Convention to elect the first female CLC President – Bea Bruske -- who is from Manitoba!

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Gawronsky, President
Charlotte McWilliams, 1st Vice President
Douglas Troke, 2nd Vice President
Shelley Wiggins, 3rd Vice President
Ed Miller, 4th Vice President
Marc Payette, ** ACTE
Liz Dodds, Area 1
Shannon Reynolds, Area 2
Robert Wells, Area 4
Peter Yourchenko, ** Area 5
Andrew Milejszo, ** Area 6
Diane Arksey, Area 7
Michelle Scebenski, Administration

Cheryl Fraser, ** Clerical
Tammy Crowe, ** Community Support
Stephanie Swain, Community-Based Social Services
Dylan Almdal, Corrections
Stephen Roznowsky, GOLICO
Shelly Rougeau, **HCSS
Deb Jamerson, Legal
Kyle Ross, MPI
Brian Wilson, Physical Sciences
Kimberley Lynn, Post-Secondary Education
Diana Schultz, Professional Technical
Cris Quon, Social Sciences
Joe Dooley, Trades

*Carol Grant, Area 3 until December 2019
*Ray Piche, Area 3 until April 2021
*Kurt Henry, Area 8 until May 2021
*Rebecca Clifton, Emergency Medical Services until December 2019
*David Giroux, Health until January 2021
*Crystal Bisson, Health until May 2021
*Kevin Thompson, WRHA Community Programs until Dec. 2019

**Michele Hirschfield, ACTE until October 2020
**Jessie McNeill, Area 5 until December 2019
**Bev Smith, Area 6 until June 2019
**Gayle Mager, Clerical until November 2019
**Marlene Hrechka, Community Support until August 2020
**Jennifer Ryan, Community Support until February 2021
**Terry Rear, HCSS until December 2019

A Compilation of Board Decisions to Adapt MGEU's Constitutional Processes to the Risks and Restrictions of the Covid-19 Pandemic

That the 2021 MGEU Convention ratify (1) the attached decisions made by the Board of Directors to adapt the Convention and Elections Process prescribed in the Constitution in response to the COVID-19 pandemic; and (2) the extension of the terms of office for all local and provincial Union positions elected at and since the 2018 Local election meetings and Convention through to the October 2021 virtual MGEU Convention:

Motion: D. Jamerson / R. Piche

That, given current public health orders and restrictions and the extraordinary uncertainty around when these orders and restrictions may be relaxed, the Board of Directors will reschedule the 2020 MGEU Convention and a similar related meeting cycle to the earliest practical dates allowable within Manitoba public health orders and restrictions. This decision and the rationale for it will be clearly communicated to all MGEU members via multiple media.

Carried – April 21, 2020

Motion: K. Lynn / S. Roznowsky

That, given the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic to holding in-person meetings, the MGEU will hold one Local meeting for each Local during the months of September and October 2020 to address the following three items:

- (1) to elect delegates for the next MGEU Convention;
- (2) to pass resolutions for the next MGEU Convention; and
- (3) to elect Local table officers, stewards, and members-at-large for the term beginning after the next MGEU Convention.

Should public health restrictions prevent the holding or completion of these meetings, the Board of Directors will meet to determine an alternative plan.

Carried – August 5, 2020

Recommendation #2

That the pre-Convention Local meetings (Local executive/delegate elections; resolutions) planned for September and October 2020 be postponed until public health restrictions allow.

Motion: R. Piche / D. Jamerson

To accept recommendation #2 as presented.

4th VP Miller joined the meeting via phone and will vote verbally.

Carried (Unanimously) - August 27, 2020

Recommendation #4

That MGEU staff be directed to present to the Board of Directors, at the November 2020 Board meeting, information/options to proceed with local and province-wide Union elections without in-person meetings should the MGEU be unable to safely and practically proceed with in-person Local meetings by April 30, 2021.

Motion: R. Piche / C. Fraser

To accept recommendation #4 as presented.

Carried (Unanimously) - August 27, 2020

○ **Option E (“Convention in Two Acts”)**

Hold a remote, two-day Convention in October 2021, with remote, combined Local election meetings in April-June of 2021, an in-person Special Convention in June 2022, and resumption of the Election/Convention Cycle in 2023 or 2024:

- Work with vendor to develop plan for all election and Convention meetings to be conducted remotely, with the ability to participate by either smartphone or other device with access to the internet.
- Conduct **Local election meetings** remotely in April-June 2021 to (1) elect Convention delegates; (2) elect Local table officers, and (3) discuss the Report of the Committee on a Three-year Convention/Elections Cycle:
 - Candidates for office would be informed that, if elected, their term of office would be either two or three years, depending on the outcome of the Convention debate regarding the Report of the Three-year Convention/Elections Cycle Committee.
- Stage **a two-day Convention** remotely, using a local production stage for the broadcast, in October 2021:
 - Convention agenda to consist of **essential business** (as described in this report), as well as **unfinished business from 2018 Convention** (the Report of the Three-year Convention/Elections Cycle Committee).
 - Ratify the necessary deviations from the usual election/convention process at Convention, and seek Convention approval for Constitutional amendments to empower the Board to deal with similar extraordinary circumstances in the future.
 - Recommend passage of a resolution at Convention to hold **a two-day Special Convention** in June 2022 to deal with member resolutions.
 - Recommend passage of a resolution at Convention to resume the regular Convention/Elections Cycle in 2023 or 2024, depending on the outcome of the debate on the Report of the Three-year Convention/Elections Cycle Committee.
- Related meetings, such as the **all-candidates bearpit session** to be held remotely in the preceding weeks.
- Hold **Component Executive and Area Council election meetings remotely** in the days and weeks following Convention.
- Hold a **Board meeting** remotely in December to elect Standing Committee Chairs.
- The new term of office would begin the day after Convention for Local table officers and for Provincial Officers. The new term of office for Component and Area directors would begin upon their election.

And, assuming Convention accepts recommendation regarding a Special Convention:

- **Local meetings to pass resolutions for the Special Convention** and the 2022 NUPGE Convention would be held in-person, if possible, in February-March 2022.
- Resolutions would be processed in April-May 2022.
- **A two-day Special Convention** would be held in-person, if possible, in June 2022. The date **next regular Convention** would take place in October of 2023 or 2024, depending on the outcome of the Convention debate regarding the Report of the Three-year Convention/Elections Cycle Committee.

Motion: B. Wilson / R. Wells

That the Board vote on options A, B, C, D, and E once discussion of the options paper is complete.

Discussion/debate held. Brother Wilson closed debate.

Vote on the motion. **Carried**

Brother Roznowsky moved to adopt Option E; Brother Piche seconded the motion.

Motion withdrawn.

Discussion on voting process for option selection; President Gawronsky confirmed that the option that receives the plurality of votes will determined the result.

Question

Which option does the MGEU Board endorse to conduct the business to the 2020 MGEU Convention and associated meetings/elections?

Result of Vote: **Option E** received a majority of votes.

Carried – November 20, 2020