

On the Road to Bargaining

September 2011

PUTTING
PEOPLE
FIRST

MGEU

Manitoba
Government
and General
Employees'
Union

GOOD JOBS

QUALITY SERVICES

STRONG COMMUNITIES

your MPI bargaining committee

**Component Director
(Area 4 Local President)**
Val Doherty - Portage, Winkler
vdoherty@mpi.mb.ca

Area 1 Local President
Doug Eyres - The Pas, Flin Flon
deyres@mpi.mb.ca

Area 2 Local President
Sharon Stoltz - Dauphin, Swan River
sstoltz@mpi.mb.ca

Area 3 Local President
Paulina Harron - Brandon
pharron@mpi.mb.ca

Area 5 Local President
Jacques Lambert - Beausejour,
Arborg, Steinbach, Selkirk
jlambert@mpi.mb.ca

Area 7 Local President
Beth Hazelwood - Winnipeg
bhazelwood@mpi.mb.ca

Area 7 Representatives
Amanda Caufield - Winnipeg
acaufield@mpi.mb.ca

Marc Moins - Winnipeg
mmoins@mpi.mb.ca

Area 8 Chief Steward
Sherri Ryan - Thompson
sryan2@mpi.mb.ca

READY, SET, BARGAIN!

Attention all MPI members! While our collective agreement doesn't expire until next fall (September 2012), we will be starting negotiations this spring. Over the next three months, your bargaining committee (listed on the left) and I will be travelling around the province to collect bargaining proposals and compile a "wish list" that will form the basis of the package we present to the employer.

As your staff rep and chief negotiator, I'll be working closely with your elected committee to negotiate a new and improved contract with MPI over the coming year. But we can't do it without your help.

Have Your Say! We need you to tell us how you think the collective agreement could be improved and what is most important to you. What kind of benefits would you like to see improved? Do you have concerns about working conditions, workloads, and workplace rules?

We've scheduled forty meetings in more than twenty locations to make sure we can speak

directly with as many of you as possible. We've tried to schedule times and locations that are convenient – in most cases, this means coming to your workplace at lunch, or right after work.

Please try to attend a meeting, even if it's just to listen to what's being said.

Turn over for the complete meeting schedule and a brief overview of the bargaining road ahead!



MGEU Negotiator
and Area 7 Rep
Miranda Lawrence

ATTEND A UNION MEETING THIS FALL AND SCORE...



Fill out a ballot at your Local meeting or at any MGEU office to win*:

1st prize: Two tickets to a Jets home game

2nd prize: A Jets jersey

3rd prize: Six tickets to an MJHL game of your choice

*Jets game date and jersey to be chosen by MGEU.

One entry per member.

Deadline for entries: December 19, 2011.

Better Coverage for Less

As you may be aware, PC candidate Gord Steeves appeared on television earlier this summer asking "Is auto insurance a service government needs to provide? I'd be more interested in fostering... the private sector."

Since Gord asked the question, we thought we'd answer it for him. If MPI became private it could have a serious negative impact on your job. That's why the MGEU is standing up for public insurance and fighting for MPI members by creating an online campaign, called bettercoverageforless.ca, which discusses the merits of our public system.

The MGEU is also running a 30-second ad on sites like the Winnipeg Free Press, Global TV, CBC.ca, CTV and other media sites for two weeks (started August 21, 2011.)

Visit bettercoverageforless.ca to find out more about the advantages of a public insurance system and remember to ask your candidate during this fall's election where they stand on privatizing MPI. Please share the page with your co-workers, family and friends or on your favourite social networking site.

What Would Privatization Mean for You?

Privatization of MPI would have a big impact on you, not just as a vehicle owner, but also as an employee. Most private insurance companies' head offices aren't located in Manitoba. Privatization would almost certainly mean a significant loss of jobs at MPI and in Manitoba in general.

The restructuring associated with privatization would also likely impact wages, working conditions, workload and morale. Privatization often results in the use of more temporary or part-time positions, and disruptions to work through increased overtime, shift changes, and location transfers. That is why the MGEU is taking any threat of privatization very seriously.

Wendy Sol from the Communications Energy and Paperworkers Union says that since MTS was privatized in the 1990s, 30% of positions have been cut, full-time positions have dropped to only 54% of the workforce and many staff were centralized to Winnipeg, taking jobs away from regional offices.

Sol says: "With a publicly-owned crown corporation, investment goes back to providing lower rates, services and jobs in our communities rather than to the pockets of overpaid CEO's and out-of-country shareholders."

Read about her experience and more at workingfamilies.ca.

Learn more about the public insurance advantage at bettercoverageforless.ca.



Average Auto Insurance Rates by Province

Source: National Study of Automobile Insurance Rates Consumers Association of Canada, 2005

Attend One of these Bargaining Meetings in Your Area

Winnipeg, Union Centre (275 Broadway) Room 103: Tuesday, Sept. 27 (drop in anytime between 3:30 and 5:30pm, local meeting at 6:30pm):

Flin Flon Claim Centre: Thursday, Oct. 6 (noon)

The Pas Claim Centre: Thursday, Oct. 6 (5pm)

Arborg Service Centre: Wednesday, Oct. 12 (11:45am and 1pm)

Selkirk Service Centre: Wednesday, Oct. 12 (5pm)

Beausejour Service Centre: Thursday, Oct. 13 (11:45am and 1pm)

Steinbach Claim Centre, 91 North Front Dr: Thursday, Oct. 13 (5pm)

Swan River Claim Centre: Monday, Oct. 17 (noon)

Dauphin Service Centre: Monday, Oct. 17 (5pm)

Brandon Service Centre: Tuesday, Oct. 18 (noon and 1pm)

Brandon MGEU Office (1665 Parker Blvd.): Tuesday, Oct. 18 (5:15pm)

Winkler Service Centre: Wednesday, Oct. 19 (11:45am and 1pm)

Portage la Prairie Claim Centre: Wednesday, Oct. 19 (5pm)

Winnipeg, Cityplace 2nd floor theatre: Tuesday, Oct. 25 (meetings at 11:30am, 12:15pm, and 1pm or drop-in anytime between 3 and 5:30pm)

Winnipeg, Bison Service Centre: Wed., Oct. 26 (11:30am and 1pm)

Winnipeg, Gateway Service Centre: Thurs., Oct. 27 (11:30am and 1pm)

Winnipeg, Main St. Service Centre: Wed., Nov. 2 (11:30am and 1pm)

Winnipeg, St. Marys Rd Service Centre: Thurs., Nov. 3 (11:30am and 12:30pm)

Winnipeg, Pembina Service Centre: Fri., Nov. 4 (12:00pm and 1pm)

Winnipeg, Physical Damage Centre, Building 'A', small boardroom: Thurs., Nov. 8 (11:30am, and 1pm)

Winnipeg, Pacific Service Centre: Wed., Nov. 9 (11:30am and 1pm)

Winnipeg, King Ed. Service Centre: Tues., Nov 10 (11:30am and 1pm)

Thompson Service Centre: Wed., Nov. 16 (11:45am and 1:00pm)



Don't want to wait for a meeting? Share your negotiating priorities with the bargaining committee today.

E-mail: miranda.lawrence@mgeu.ca • Fax (attn: Miranda): 942-2146 • Mail: 601-275 Broadway
Winnipeg, MB R3C 4M6



The current collective agreement with Manitoba Public Insurance is set to expire in September 2012, which means it's time to begin preparing for negotiations. Here's a brief guide to contract negotiations with the MGEU.

Collective Bargaining Begins at Local Meetings

The bargaining process begins at a Local meeting, where members elect who will speak on their behalf (usually the Local Table Officers). At this stage of the process, their first order of business is to organize a series of meetings to collect bargaining proposals from members like you.

Have Your Say in Negotiations - Submit a Bargaining Proposal

Bargaining proposal meetings are your chance to share what you'd like to see in your contract, or to suggest improvements to what currently exists. Members complete a proposal form and bring it to one of the scheduled meetings. At these meetings, members will discuss each proposal and help the committee determine key priorities to improve the contract.

Based on this feedback, the bargaining

committee will work to create a package of proposals (including things like wage or benefit improvements, or remedies to workload and health and safety concerns) that they will bring to the negotiating table on your behalf.

Bargaining - A Give and Take Process

At the outset of negotiations, your bargaining committee will sit down with the employer and present the package of proposals. The employer will also come to the table with changes they'd like to make to the contract. From there, the negotiating process, which can last several months, usually involves a kind of give and take as each side accepts, amends, rejects or withdraws the proposals put forward. At all times, the bargaining committee is working to maintain and/or gain as much as possible for you and your fellow members.

Protecting Your Interests at the Table

Until negotiations are finished and the agreement is ratified, nothing is set in stone. That's why it's not always possible for your bargaining committee to share all of the details being discussed at the table.

Throughout negotiations, the committee will do its best to keep you informed. But to avoid damaging their negotiating position, there are times when they won't be able to share all of the details. Like a game of cards, they don't want the employer to know what their strategy is – and they know that any information sent to you will be read by management – so sometimes the committee must keep their cards close to their chest.

3 Scenarios for Getting a Deal

Scenario #1

Most often a settlement is eventually reached between the bargaining committee and management. At that point, the proposed contract is taken to members of the bargaining unit for a vote. The settlement must be accepted by the majority of voting members before it's considered "ratified." Once signed by both the union and management, you'll get a written copy of the contract.

Scenario #2

Occasionally, the majority of voting members do not accept the tentative settlement. In this case, the employer may agree to return to the table, but most often the membership will then take a strike vote. More than fifty percent of all voting members must vote in favour before any strike action is taken. After a successful strike vote, the employer will sometimes agree to return to the bargaining table and try to resume negotiations.

Scenario #3

There are times when a tentative settlement can't be reached between the union bargaining committee and management. Depending on the situation, both sides might agree to request third-party assistance from the Manitoba Labour Board, or the union might go directly to a strike vote.

MGEU

Manitoba
Government
and General
Employees'
Union

contact us...

982-6438

(toll-free 1-866-982-6438)

TTY toll-free 1-866-982-6599

e-mail: resourcecentre@mgeu.ca

www.mgeu.ca

Save a tree. Receive this
publication by e-mail?

Send a message to

resourcecentre@mgeu.ca

and tell us you'd like to receive

future editions of this newsletter by e-mail.

Remember to include your full name.