

WRHA COMMUNITY PROGRAMS BARGAINING BULLETIN

The bargaining newsletter for MGEU Local 220: WRHA Community Programs

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Strike mandate moves employer away from some clawbacks, but seven-day schedule proposal remains



Since our strike vote in January, negotiations on a new contract have resumed, and we wanted to give you an update on what's been happening at the bargaining table.

After a very successful strike vote, our Local 220-WRHA Community Programs Bargaining Committee returned to the bargaining table on January 30.

The strong strike mandate from the membership was instrumental in getting both sides back to the table and pushing the employer off of a number of their contract clawback proposals. As your elected Committee, we cannot thank you enough for attending the meetings, casting your ballots, and sending such a decisive message to the employer. When all of the ballots were counted, 98% supported strike action – and that was key to moving negotiations forward.

When talks resumed January 30 and continued over several meetings in February, the employer was prepared to remove many of their clawback proposals, which they had refused to take off the table before the vote.

However, some of their clawback proposals still remain on the table, including the provision to move operations to a seven-day work schedule.

We know members find this particular proposal unacceptable and our Committee will continue to negotiate against it. We also have unanimous support from the MGEU Board of Directors, who are behind our Local against such contract clawbacks.

Additional bargaining sessions with the WRHA's representatives are scheduled for March 17, 20 and 27, 2015.

Strike still a possibility, but not the only option

We know members have been curious to know if a strike is still possible. Yes it is. However, with the strong strike mandate members provided in January, our Committee has been able to move negotiations along and get the WRHA to remove many of its proposals. As long as bargaining is moving forward – which could include seeking the assistance of a conciliator or mediator – there is no reason to end the talks.

And while the bargaining process continues, the committee also continues to meet with WRHA representatives to establish an Essential Services Agreement, which must be in place before any kind of job action (i.e. strike) can take place.

If, after exercising all other options, it is necessary to take job action, our Committee has the mandate from the membership to do so. We do not take this step lightly and would communicate our intent and share all other necessary details with you, if the time comes.

Please remember that we have a Local meeting coming up on March 12 (5:30pm at Canad Inns Polo Park) and if you have not already done so, please visit www.mgeu.ca and use the "Update Your Information" link to submit your home email address, so we can send the latest bargaining news to your inbox.

-Your MGEU Local 220 Bargaining Committee

HOW AN IDEA BECOMES PART OF YOUR CONTRACT

All MGEU members work under the protection of a contract (aka collective agreement) negotiated with their employer. The MGEU oversees hundreds of contracts and each one is built upon democratic principles. Bargaining is a complicated process and no two rounds of bargaining are the same.

Here's generally how it works.



MGEU MEETING NOTICE
Affected union members receive a meeting notice

X Majority rejects tentative agreement

STRIKE – Can help apply pressure on employer. A majority must vote in favour, but a positive vote does not automatically result in job action.

ARBITRATION – Each party presents their case to a third-party arbitrator who assesses the arguments and makes a legally-binding ruling.

CONCILIATION – To help reach a resolution, the two parties each talk separately with a conciliator, who advises and makes proposals to each side but doesn't impose a settlement.

MEDIATION – Both parties return to the bargaining table with a neutral third party mediator who facilitates face-to-face discussion but doesn't impose a settlement.

WE ARE HERE IN THE BARGAINING PROCESS

MGEU
Manitoba Government and General Employees' Union