

UFCW Canada Local 1006A General Membership Meeting  
August 16, 2022  
Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

Hi everyone. My name is Glacier Effs-Samuel, Recorder of your union. It's great to see so many members joining us for our third town hall general membership meeting for 2022. We're excited to welcome you to our town hall, which is about building connections, strength, and unity within our membership. It's about informing you our members about the latest union news and exciting opportunities, whether it be scholarship programs or free online courses. We've had to dial thousands of members from different workplaces, sectors, and cities, thank you for your patience as we connect to everyone. Tonight, we'll hear from president Wayne Hanley about the latest union news and member opportunities. Secretary Treasurer, Kevin Benn will join us to provide a summary of the locals 2021 audited financial statement. We'll also hear from young worker coordinator, Joel Thelosen about UFCW Canada's dynamic young worker internship program. Stay with us for the entire call and you'll have a chance to win a Samsung tablet. We'll have more details about that later on.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

Tonight, we also hope to hear from you. Telephone operators are standing by to take down your questions and pass them on to us. To ask a question, all you have to do is press star three on your phone keypad. Please make sure you give your full question, name, and where you work to the operator who will then pass them on to us. Once again, press star three to ask a question. Questions about individual workplace issues will be forwarded to your union representative who will contact you no later than tomorrow night with an answer. As we have done in our past meetings, we'll post an audio file, meeting transcript, and meeting minutes to our union website. During each telephone town hall general membership meeting members vote to adopt the minutes of the previous meeting. Once again, stay with us for the entire call and you'll have a chance to win a Samsung tablet.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

So let's get started. We'll be taking a vote for the adoption of the minutes of the telephone town hall general membership meeting as posted on our local union's website held on April 19th, 2022. Use your telephone keypad to participate in the vote. So the question before you is, do you approve of the minutes of the telephone town hall general membership meeting held on April 19th, 2022? Press one if you approve of the minutes of the April 19th, 2022 meeting and press two if you do not approve of the minutes of the April 19th, 2022 meeting. Once again, press one, if you approve of the minutes of the April 19th, 2022 meeting, or press two, if you do not approve of the minutes.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

As we wait for the results, I encourage you to visit our website to stay connected. Every month our union also sends out emails to our members, if you're not receiving these union emails or your union magazine, please visit our website to update your contact information. Our website is [ufcw1006a.ca](http://ufcw1006a.ca). Once again, it's [ufcw1006a.ca](http://ufcw1006a.ca). The results are in and the minutes of the April 19th, 2022 telephone town hall meeting has been approved 90% in favour.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

I'd like to remind you that telephone operators are standing by to take down your question. Again, just press star three if you want to ask a question. Also, a quick reminder of our membership contest, members who stay on the line for the entire call will have a chance to win a Samsung tablet. We want to send congratulations to Brandon Cato from Maple Grove Distribution Centre in Cambridge, who was our

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contest winner in our April meeting. So stick around for a chance to be a winner. Now it's my pleasure to introduce Secretary Treasurer, Kevin Benn, who will present the local 2021 audited financial report.

Kevin Benn:

Good evening everyone. And thank you Glacier, it's my pleasure to be on the line with you tonight and to provide you with the summary of the local's 2021 audited financial statement. As is done each year, an independent auditing firm have audited the finances of the local union this past April, the 2021 audited financial statement was presented, reviewed and approved at the local union's executive board meeting in June. Despite the third, fourth, and the beginning of the fifth wave of COVID and the Omicron variant impacting everyone's lives in 2021, the finances of the local union remained strong. Although continually challenged, we were able to maintain the support and representation that our members deserve and are accustomed to throughout the pandemic. A good example of this was with our stewards training program, we still couldn't meet in person. So we focused on those new stewards who had yet to complete the introductory stewards course.

Kevin Benn:

That course had been adapted to be presented virtually and over 100 new stewards were able to participate and complete the program. For other stewards and members, we offered virtual health and safety seminars throughout the year to keep them updated and informed. And we also continued on with our online voting processes for collective agreement ratification votes. I am pleased to report that through it all, we've continued to serve the membership while managing our revenues, our expenses, and our assets with the utmost care and diligence so that we have the resources to defend and protect our members through the challenges we have collectively faced. Every year, it's our goal to operate the local union on a balanced budget. And as you know, revenue for the local is primarily generated through membership dues, initiation fees, and investment income. During the latter half of 2021, many of our members who were struggling through layoff were thankfully being recalled back to work.

Kevin Benn:

With members returning to the workforce and some employers hiring more staff, the local union saw a slight increase in dues and initiation income over that, which we saw in 2020. Keeping in mind that our local union is quite large, revenue generated through dues and initiation fees in 2021 was \$17,856,554. Although we were still unable to meet in person in 2021, the local union's expenses increased slightly from 2020, a large part of the increase was due to the ultimate gift card promotion that was initiated earlier in the year to recognize the tremendous contributions made and the hardships experienced by our members during the pandemic. Nearly 8,500 gift cards valued at \$20 each were sent to members who had registered online. The total expenses incurred by the local union for 2021 were \$16,375,646. Apart from the revenue and expense summaries, we realized positive movement in the markets last year, unlike in 2020, the markets performed better in 2021, which in turn had a direct effect on the income earned through the local union's investments.

Kevin Benn:

As a result, our investment income portfolio as of December 31st, 2021 had grown to \$31,549,149 up from slightly over 27 million in December of 2020. So when we combine our fixed assets, such as the value of our office building in Woodbridge and our equipment to our cash and investments, the total local union holdings as of December 31, 2021 were \$39,504,909. Although Covid doesn't seem to be

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going away as quickly or as quietly as we would all have liked and frankly may continue to bring challenges to the local union with how we do things. I am very proud of the work that we have done to continue to represent our members through these difficult times. So Glacier, I'd like to conclude my report by stating that we will continue to be prudent in making the decisions that allow us to build on and maintain a strong and healthy financial position while ensuring the needs of our members are being met and continuing to maintain the very high level of service to protect and advocate for our members and all workers in Ontario.

Glacier Effe-Samuel:

Thank you, Kevin, for your report.

Kevin Benn:

Thank you, Glacier.

Glacier Effe-Samuel:

I will now move to adopt the Secretary Treasurer's 2021 audited financial report as just presented by Secretary Treasurer, Kevin Benn. Press one on your keypad to vote, to accept the Secretary Treasurer's report or press two to reject the Secretary Treasurer's report. Once again, press one to vote to accept the Secretary Treasurer's report or press two to vote against accepting the Secretary Treasurer's report. Each year, we provide a summary of the previous year's audited financial reports during one of our telephone town hall meetings. Remember, if you have any questions about the financial report, you can talk to your union rep.

Glacier Effe-Samuel:

And as the results are in 95% of you have voted to accept the Secretary Treasurer's report as presented by Secretary Treasurer, Kevin Benn, thank you all. Now it's my honor to introduce the president of our union, Wayne Hanley.

Wayne Hanley:

Thank you Kevin, for your report and it's so important to be in a strong financial position so that we have the resources that are necessary to support and protect our members as challenges arise. I hope all of you and your loved ones are having a good summer. Here at the local union it's been a busy summer for us. We've had several set of negotiations that are ongoing and several that have been concluded. One of our largest employers, No Frills, which has 12,000 members, 1006A members at nearly 150 stores across the province began negotiations back in March. After our most recent meeting in late July, we requested that the conciliation officer from the Ministry of Labour become involved in the negotiations between us and No Frills. We believe that this is an essential step towards hopefully a fair settlement.

Wayne Hanley:

Our members of No Frills, many who may be on the call here tonight, participated in a strike vote back in early July. 96% voted in favour, providing their committee for the strike mandate. I want to thank all of our membership for their strong support of the negotiating committee. Thousands of members participated in the strike vote and delivered a strong message that they deserve a fair contract. Other negotiating committees have worked hard to achieve renewed union contracts at their workplaces.

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Comfort Inn in Ingersoll, SSP Food Services at Toronto Pearson International Airport, the Ottawa Food Bank, Aramark Food Services, we have two locations at Seneca College at York University, Compass Group food workers at Maple Leaf Lounge at Pearson Airport, Red Lobster in Burlington, Unifirst Laundry in Mississauga, Indigo Yorkdale and Scarborough are just a few of the many sets of negotiations that have been concluded. And like I said, there's many others that are ongoing.

Wayne Hanley:

It's important to remember that the active of support of our membership makes all the difference in achieving a fair contract. Your employer knows that the strength of 1006A members when we are united, that unity and solidarity and support of a common goal goes a long ways to securing that fair union contract that you deserve. Thank you to all the members who volunteer their time to make a difference to build a better workplace.

Wayne Hanley:

Your union is also working to ensure that your rights under your union contractor are protected by filing grievances and sometimes forcing those grievances onto arbitration. At Loblaws, your union believes the member seniority rights under the union contract are being disregarded due to the way that the company is choosing to implement the shift market program, more specifically, the shift offer program. As I've reported to you in the past in response your union has filed multiple grievances for affected members, and we've also filed the policy grievances. We have met with Loblaws multiple times in an attempt to resolve this issue, we've made it very clear to the company and we've put them on notice that the violation of seniority rights that has flawed in the program must be fixed and fixed soon, we've been very patient. The company has indicated that they are trying to fix the new scheduling app that they've most recently laid out. And they're trying to address our concerns and recognize seniority.

Wayne Hanley:

I can share with you that an arbitration hearing now has been set for the mid part of January of 2023 and if it's not resolved between Loblaws and the union, we will have an arbitrator make a decision, and quite frankly, it may result in the whole electronic scheduling system shut down. So hopefully that will be a motivation for the employer to come address our concerns seriously and make the necessary adjustments in the software to allow seniority to be a determining factor when shifts are available to our members. Moving on to another topic, I'm pleased to report that our organizing department continues to experience great success in organizing new members. Since the last town hall, I'm proud to report that more than 115 new members from Darling International recently voted to join our union. Darling handles the management of collecting processing and recycling, edible, and inedible animal byproducts.

Wayne Hanley:

I'd now like to tell you or report to you some exciting opportunities for our members and their families. The deadline for our union scholarship program is next month on September 30th. So I encourage all of you to get your applications in. The program is open to members and their children and dependents. We award 42 scholarships each year worth \$1,006. We know that the cost of post-secondary education is rising every year and this is our way of helping students and families achieve their post-secondary dreams and goals. So go online to [ufcw1006a.ca](http://ufcw1006a.ca) and apply, it only takes a few minutes, there's no essay required. For the first time in two years, there will be a Labour Day parade in downtown Toronto on

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September 5th and 1006A will be participating. We will be providing free admission to the CNE, to members and their families who march with us. To assist us with numbers, please register your CNE wristbands or for your wristbands to get into the CNE free of charge register on our website.

Wayne Hanley:

The parade is a great opportunity to connect with your union staff, other union members and stewards. It's a unique opportunity to celebrate our union and the labour movement and I encourage all of you to come and bring your family and bring your friends for a great activity, a great day. Again, we'll be meeting at the corner of University and Queen Street in Toronto from 8:15 to 9:15, when the parade will kick off on September 5th. Please check out our website for more details and I hope to see you there in the future. For those members not in the GTA, community Labour Day events are back after pandemic events from family picnics to marches are planned, and we have a link on our website to show you what celebrations may be happening in your community.

Wayne Hanley:

I also want to invite you to participate in the union health and safety seminar on ergonomics on Tuesday, August 30th at 7:00 PM. Our health and safety department has been regularly holding online seminars to empower members and stewards with the knowledge that they need to protect the health and safety of our membership. Since the last town hall, we held seminars on workplace violence and harassment early and safe return to work and health and safety workplace inspections. I want to thank all of you who have participated in these seminars and watch your emails for details of upcoming seminars. I'd like to remind you that the union's WSIB department is here for you. It continues to work hard to defend the interest of injured workers and ensure that they get the representation and compensation that they are entitled to. In addition, the department is working hard to raise awareness on the issues faced by injured workers and all workers, including the need for legislative paid sick days.

Wayne Hanley:

Community and labour allies are urging the Ford government to implement 10 permanent paid sick days, instead of the temporary extension of the worker income protection benefit of three days, that falls far short of what workers need. Workers should be able to choose between staying home when they're sick, or to be off and receive sick benefits.

Wayne Hanley:

Since last town hall meeting, I'm pleased to report that our union participated in the first in-person Pride Toronto in two years, the event drew hundreds of thousands from across Canada and was an opportunity to stand up for equality, fairness and justice for all. It was also a way to stand in solidarity with our friends in the 2SLGBTQI community, and show that in our union, everyone belongs and everyone is welcome. I was proud to march alongside of our outreach committee and members, they did an outstanding job representing our union during the parade and in the street fair.

Wayne Hanley:

And one last thing. Good news, in October of this year, 1006A will be having a steward's conference. We had a two year hiatus where we had to defer our conference because of the pandemic, but all systems are go to have the stewards conference in October of this year, keeping our fingers crossed that there's

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no wave of a new virus that prevents this from happening. Now, Glacier, I'll turn it back over to you and to our next group of guests.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

Thank you, Wayne. So up next, we're excited to welcome some young workers from our 1006A membership to share their recent experience with UFCW Canada Young Worker Internship Program. Tonight we have 1006A Communications Rep and Young Worker Coordinator, Joel Thelosen on the line. Hi Joel, thank you for being with us this evening.

Joel Thelosen:

Hi, good to be here.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

So something that members on the line may not know is that UFCW Canada is a union for many young workers across the country. More than 40% of the UFCW membership across the country is under the age of 30. In grocery retail, that percentage is significantly higher.

Joel Thelosen:

Yeah, that's right, Glacier. And that's why UFCW Canada invests a lot in young worker members from the various post-secondary scholarship opportunities that Wayne had just mentioned, or to campaigns and support of students like our toss tuition campaign, UFCW Canada is a leading force for young worker advocacy and activism. And the crowning jewel of our young worker initiatives is the longstanding young worker internship program. We like to call it YIP for short. And since it's started in the year 2000, YIP has become one of the premier training and education programs offered at the national level. And tonight we are lucky to have a couple of young YIP graduates on the line from the 2022 program to share some of their experiences and insights on the program. So let's welcome Travis from No Frills in Amherstburg and Greta from Indigo Yorkdale in Toronto.

Joel Thelosen:

Hello, Greta and Travis. Thank you both for joining us.

Travis Coklow:

Hey, thanks for having me.

Greta Whipple:

Thanks for having us. It's delight to be here.

Joel Thelosen:

So the first question I had is the YIP program is designed to help foster a better understanding of unions, the economy and globalization also organizing in human rights. Over the week long training session, what was your biggest takeaway from YIP?

Greta Whipple:

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Man, so for me, it was kind of a little bit mind blowing just to hear the context within society that unions operate. It kind of seems like a no brainer in hindsight, but at the time I just thought, okay yeah. The union does things for us in the workplace, but there's obviously a broader society that it sits within just talking about the Canadian council for labour and the international organizations that exist as well. I was like, oh my God. But again, it makes perfect sense, but I think it's a testament to just how little the education system really covers, like the existence of unions and how deep that goes. So it was delightful to hear that the arms reach out that far, but I had no idea prior.

Travis Coklow:

Yeah, I actually, I didn't know it was such a large movement and learning about it kind of made me more proud to be a part of it and want to do more.

Joel Thelosen:

That's so great to hear. Travis, what was the one thing that you learned that stuck with you from the session?

Travis Coklow:

So I actually learned a lot from the YIP session going into it. I only knew that unions were there for the members. And if there was a problem with scheduling or harassment, et cetera, they would be there to back you up. But coming out of YIP, I fully understand what a grievance is and what they can do for members and how big the union is in general.

Joel Thelosen:

Yes, the Canadian labour movement is large. Our 35,000 member local is a member of the Canadian Labour Congress, which is composed of more than three million members. These are workers seeking to improve their workplaces right across the country. Travis, you had recently stepped up to become a union steward in your workplace, why do you feel it is important for young workers like yourself to get involved in their union?

Travis Coklow:

I think it's important for people to get involved in the union because you have to know your rights. You have to know when an employer is taking advantage of someone or how to defend yourself or help fellow members in any situation that they may have when it comes to work. I know my previous employer, I've seen him take advantage, I've seen him speak down to people and stuff like that. And he was the number one reason why I wanted to become a union steward and learn more.

Joel Thelosen:

Well, I'm glad you decided to step up and get involved. Greta, unlike Travis and many of our members who are hired into a unionized workplace with the protection of the union contract already in place, you and your coworkers of Indigo, many of who are young workers decided to organize and unionize your workplace. What appeal did unionization have for young workers?

Greta Whipple:

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I think basically the most common thread was people being so tired of having no rights, literally just being like, okay, I hope that the managers will be understanding here. Maybe the company will make a choice that doesn't make us want to die or actually put our lives and health at risk, especially in the wake of COVID. So it really was people just being like, look, I want something that is kind of a basis for everybody that we can all operate within that isn't just punitive and just hoping for, okay, maybe this time it'll be a nice thing. So it was really, I think for everybody about having a say in your own employment and having someone who you could go to, for when you felt you were being treated unfairly. So having the store rep come in handy that... And even now it's been instrumental as well. We never had that before, and I wish we had, it would be a delight to have walked into a workplace that was already unionized because the work's already done.

Greta Whipple:

But at the same time, I don't think would've done it a different way. That was a life changing experience, running that campaign, so we lived and learned and I think it's all been for the better, for sure.

Joel Thelosen:

Question on intergenerational solidarity, many of our workplaces are very diverse, particularly in terms of age ranges, for example, in grocery retail, we have a lot of members who this may be their very first job, which I'm sure at Indigo that's possible as well, first time jobs, folks in high school, two members, folks coming into retail environments as looking for something part time. So there's often a huge age range in these industries.

Greta Whipple:

Yeah.

Joel Thelosen:

But do you have any suggestions coming out of YIP or just your lived experience on how to grow that intergenerational solidarity to build those bridges between younger and older workers?

Greta Whipple:

What was interesting for us again, because our store, we had to create our first contract. There were people who were trying to identify as they would be up for sure, yes vote, we're not sure, and this is probably a no vote. And a couple of the older folks who've been there, there's this one gentleman who's worked for Indigo 20 years perhaps, he said that he's worked with previous iterations of stores that have been unionized. So he was kind of like a godsend in that regard because he could speak to what he saw had changed. I would say people who've been in any workforce for a long time, have a lot to say. They've been dealing with it for longer, so of course, they have more experiences. And especially if they have worked in a unionized environment, that's invaluable. Because for younger people, especially those who are starting their first job, it remains a little bit of an abstract.

Greta Whipple:

But if you're talking to somebody who has seen both sides of it, that's so important, and even if they're not somebody who's in your workplace, say it was an older nurse that you knew. The principles are going to be the same, they can speak to how I think over the course of time they've seen dividends on



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having had a contract in place for X number of years. So the conversations are for sure important. And I was humbled to be like, yeah there's really no point in dismissing people or the possibility of their interest based on their age. Because you have truly no idea. So you really do have to talk to everybody.

Joel Thelosen:

Yes. Inclusivity is so important to building that solidarity within a workplace. Travis, what about you? Do you have any suggestions on how to strengthen your workplace?

Travis Coklow:

I think some suggestions, one of the big things that I like to do with some of the older guys and some of the younger guys is I like to form a bond, no matter what age, race, religion, colour, creed, or sexual orientation, you can always lend a hand, you can always help out in some different way. Even, hi, how's your day going? Can go a really long way with a lot of people. So that's the bond that I'm talking about.

Joel Thelosen:

With the young worker internship program, so it's wrapped up for this year, but we're going to hopefully be running another session in 2023. What would you want to say to a young worker who's thinking about applying or talking to their union rep about the opportunity about the program? What would you want them to know about your experience?

Greta Whipple:

I'd go for sure. I think we kind of all made friends for life there, which was really great, but especially for people who maybe didn't know as much and they were curious of hey, this is my first job. What does this organization do for me? I can imagine, as mind blown as I was, you'd be getting even more so if this was kind of your first introduction to just how broad the scope of the UFCW's work is and unions as a whole, but I would for sure recommend, a 10 out of 10. Yeah, you're really never going to have an opportunity where you can connect with people like A, comparable in age to you, B, working in such a wide variety of sectors, but facing the same issues. And even though the industry's being different, we're all facing the same problem. So there's a lot of solidarity that was built in that regard too. And I think we'd all kind of understand the industry a lot better. So it would be a mistake not to apply, I think.

Joel Thelosen:

I think we'll leave it on that note. Thank you both Greta and Travis for your insights and for joining us.

Greta Whipple:

Oh absolutely.

Travis Coklow:

Thank you and take care.

Joel Thelosen:

The young worker internship program typically runs annually in the summertime. Members that are interested, should speak with their union rep for more information.

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Joel Thelosen:

All right, Glacier back to you.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

Thanks Joel. And thank you, Travis and Greta for sharing a bit about your experiences with YIP and your insights with us on tonight's call. So well, Wayne, I think it's about that time to wrap up the agenda for the evening.

Wayne Hanley:

Okay. Thanks Glacier, there were some questions that did come in. Some of them have been answered in my presentation, they were asked prior to my comments. So the remaining questions are really specific to individual workplaces and the reps will be on the phones and reaching out tomorrow morning and we'll get back to you within 24 hours of tonight. So thanks Glacier and I would just say that as Fall approaches, I encourage you to get involved with your union and join us in building a better future for all. Attending a Labour Day celebration is a great place to start.

Wayne Hanley:

Also, for the No Frills members, for the members at No Frills, I'd like to thank you for your participation and support throughout and negotiating process. There were few questions that reps will get back to you on with respect to specific proposals, but I would encourage you to stay engaged if we haven't got your contact information, make sure we get it so that we can send you all the communications that are coming out of the negotiations and from negotiating tables, we'll be providing more information as negotiations progress. So thanks everybody and have a great rest of the summer. Glacier.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

Thank you, Wayne, and for those with questions that we weren't able to get to as Wayne mentioned, your rep will get back to you within 24 hours. You can find out who your union rep is by visiting our website at [www.ufcw1006a.ca](http://www.ufcw1006a.ca), click on your union rep button and please remember that the audio file and transcript of tonight's meeting will be posted on our website for your convenience. As well, the minutes of tonight's meeting will also be posted for your review and to be approved during the next meeting, which is scheduled for October 18th, 2022.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

Now we have one more thing, one more piece of business to take care of, our last poll question will enter you into the draw for the Samsung tablet. So to enter simply press one on your telephone keypad, the winner will be announced on our website tomorrow by 3:00 PM. And if you don't know the website, it is [ufcw1006a.ca](http://ufcw1006a.ca) Once again, [ufcw1006a.ca](http://ufcw1006a.ca). For those who would like to leave us a question or comment, please stay on the line. And I want to thank you all again for joining us and I hope everyone has a wonderful evening. Take care.