

UFCW Canada Local 1006A

General Membership Meeting Minutes

January 19, 2021 - 7 p.m.

Telephone Telephone Hall

President Wayne Hanley chaired the general meeting. Recorder Glacier Effs-Samuel hosted and began the meeting by welcoming participants.

1. Members voted to approve the minutes of the last telephone town hall general meeting, held on October 13, 2020.
2. Members were informed that the minutes of this meeting will be posted for review on the local union's website and voted on for adoption at the next telephone town hall general meeting.
3. President Wayne Hanley updated members on the latest union news.
 - a. The spread of COVID-19 continues to have a widespread effect on our membership, and the pandemic has worsened and intensified across Ontario.
 - b. Failure to act by the provincial government has exacerbated the situation. The consequences of putting profits over lives and not listening to health scientists has resulting in skyrocketing cases, high death rates among seniors, and slower economic recovery.
 - c. The number of members with COVID-19 has increased. Many members in the service and hospitality industry continue to face financial difficulties due to slowdowns and closures.
 - d. Many have seen a reduction in hours and work for the last 10 months.

- e. The pandemic is taking a toll on workers' mental health. A survey during the meeting found that 75% of members felt more stressed and anxious due to work circumstances during the second wave.
 - f. Staff retirements were announced. President Hanley thanked Union Representative Gord Jackson, Executive Administration Assistant Mel Joseph and Regional Director Roland Lapins for their combined 76 years of service.
 - g. The Health & Safety Department continues to provide online training courses during the pandemic to empower stewards in the workplace to better assist 1006A members.
 - h. 1006A is growing, with new members from Chapters-Indigo in Woodbridge and Superette cannabis retail dispensary voting to join our union family.
 - i. Negotiations continue through the pandemic, with gains and protections achieved for our members, New contracts were negotiated at iFly Toronto, Baxtrom's YIG, Comfort Inn Airport North, Homewood Suites Markham and Mama Earth Organics.
 - j. 1006A observed the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence from November 25 to December 10.
 - k. UFCW 1006A is committed to equality and justice in our communities.
 - l. Change is happening in labour law. A recent arbitrator's ruling in Ontario regarding racially charged misconduct at work upheld the termination of a worker who uttered racial slurs at a Black co-worker.
4. Recorder Effs-Samuel interviewed 1006A Legal Counsel Matt Masters on vaccinations, testing, leave of absences and WSIB.
 - a. Masters indicated it's possible for employers to require workers to be vaccinated, however there is no legislation currently that addresses this issue.
 - b. He noted if a member has a diagnosis or COVID-19 symptoms, they may file a WSIB claim.

- c. The WSIB adjudicates COVID-19 claims through a two-stage analysis: First, they will consider if the worker's employment created a risk of contracting the disease to which the public at large is not normally exposed. Second, they will determine that the worker's COVID-19 condition has been confirmed.
 - d. Masters also spoke on unpaid leave. He noted that if workers meet certain criteria, they may be eligible for an unpaid leave under the Employment Standards Act. Masters advised members to let their employer immediately know they are taking the leave and noted that the employer can require members to provide reasonable proof of the reasons for the leave.
 - e. With the end of CERB, Masters advised members on available supports. These include: the Canada Recovery Benefit, the Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit and the Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit.
5. Recorder Effs-Samuel also interviewed Mark Hennessy, Special Assistant to the President at UFCW Canada.
 - a. UFCW Canada is advocating for: workplace safety and worker aid for members and economic recovery. This means advocating for personal protective equipment access, security within workplaces, Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, CERB, the Canada Recovery Benefit and pandemic pay.
 - b. UFCW Canada continues to advocate for prioritization of vaccines for frontline workers. While vulnerable citizens, healthcare workers and first responders need to be first, UFCW Canada called for members in food manufacturing and grocery retail to be next.
 - c. The UFCW Canada continues to raise the issue of pandemic pay with all levels of government.
 - d. For members who want to see government action on the issues that affect them, Hennessy encouraged them to

communicate concerns to the union and advocate to their MPP and their MP.

6. President Wayne Hanley addressed questions on the pandemic pay. The union has continued to advocate on this matter with employers, raising it regularly through the first, and now the second wave. The company is refusing to budge from its position of not giving pandemic pay in the second wave despite the rising cases, and elevated risk of COVID-19.
7. Membership Contest - members were given the opportunity to enter a draw for a tablet computer. Janet Huff from Loblaw Kingston was the recipient. Notice was posted on ufcw1006a.ca
8. Open Questions - Questions and comments were all forwarded to the appropriate union representative for follow up.

7:46 PM - Meeting Adjourned

A full transcription and recording of the meeting are available to members online at www.ufcw1006a.ca