

UFCW Canada Local 1006A General Membership Meeting

April 20, 2021

Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

Glacier Effe-Samuel:

Good evening 1006A members. My name is Glacier Effe-Samuel recorder of your union. I want to welcome everyone to our second telephone town hall general membership meeting for 2021. I hope you and your family are keeping safe and I thank you for joining us tonight. Our telephone town hall as always is about being together with each other and connecting thousands of 1006A members from all sectors and cities across Ontario.

Glacier Effe-Samuel:

We've got a great program for you tonight. 1006A president Wayne Hanley will share with you the latest union news and discuss the impact of the third wave of COVID-19 on our membership. We will discuss how the pandemic is affecting your mental health and share resources to help each other through these difficult times. We will also discuss our union's increasing effort to help unionize workers in the cannabis sector.

Glacier Effe-Samuel:

And as usual, stay with us for the entire call and you'll have a chance to enter in a membership contest to win a Samsung tablet, more details will follow later on. We also hope to hear from you. So we have telephone operators standing by to take down your questions and pass them onto us. To ask a question, simply press star three on your phone and make sure you give your full name, where you work and your question to the operator, and then they'll pass them on to us. So once again, just press star three, to ask a question.

Glacier Effe-Samuel:

Any questions that we don't get to this evening or questions about individual workplace issues will be forwarded to your union representative and they will follow up with you no later than tomorrow night. If this is an urgent matter, your union reps contact information is on our website, which is ufcw1006a.ca click on to find your rep button. And shortly after each meeting an audio file, meeting transcript and minutes will be posted on our union website. During each telephone town hall, general membership meeting our members vote to adopt the minutes of the previous meeting. So let's begin with that.

Glacier Effe-Samuel:

We'll be taking a vote for the adoption of the minutes of the telephone town hall general membership meeting that was held on January 19th, 2021, and was posted on our local unions website. Use your telephone keypad to participate in the vote. So the question before us is, do you approve of the minutes of the telephone town hall general membership meeting, which was held on January 19th, 2021?

Glacier Effe-Samuel:

Press one if you're approve of the minutes, the meeting held on January 19th, 2021. Press two, if you do not approve of the minutes for the meeting held on January 19th, 2021. Once again, press one if you're approve and press two, if you do not approve. As we wait for the results to come in, I'll mention again for our members convenience an audio file printed transcript, and minutes of each meeting are posted on our website, click on the get involved section, then membership meeting to access these files.

UFCW Canada Local 1006A General Membership Meeting

April 20, 2021

Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

If you know a member who couldn't make it to the call tonight. You can let them know that they can listen to the recording of the call in its entirety online tomorrow. So the results are in and it looks like the meeting minutes have been approved 91%. So once again, the results of the minutes of the January, 19th 2021 telephone town hall meeting has been approved by 91%. Thank you guys for voting. So I'd like to remind you again, we have operators standing by to take your question, just press three on your telephone keypad, to ask a question, remember to give your full name, where you work and the question that you want them to pass on to us. And so I'd like to introduce our president of our union Wayne Hanley for the state of the union.

Wayne Hanley:

Well, thank you, Glacier and good evening everyone. First of all, I want to thank all of you for being on the call here with us tonight. I've rearranged my comments, a little bit. I'm just going to start off with a report on COVID and some comments about COVID is, seems like all communications, whether they be on the news or on the TV, when a conversation with friends and family I'll start off with COVID-19 and it pulls us down my opinion and we all deal with that in our own way.

Wayne Hanley:

But tonight, tonight I wanted to start with that a different message, a new message, and a new message of hope. And I believe we have a new message of hope coming to us tonight from Minnesota, from the murder of George Floyd. When 5:00 PM tonight courts ruled and found the police officer involved guilty of the murder of George Floyd. My hope is that this verdict is the beginning of a change, not only a change in the United States, but a change around the world.

Wayne Hanley:

I truly believe it has the ability to change and exposing, and then eradicating systemic racism, not only in law enforcement and privilege, but in society and in all organizations. Racism exists and it must be stopped. And within our workplaces, we can all take an active role at ending racism, calling it out. Your union is an ally to bring racism to an end. My hope today is that the verdict starts a new journey, a long journey, a much needed journey to ending racism. So let's all see hope in the decision with respect to George Floyd's story.

Wayne Hanley:

Now, I wish I had better news for you tonight about COVID in the province, but unfortunately, we're now in the third wave and in the middle of another provincial shutdown or quasi shutdown. And what is undisputed is we are in a crisis in our healthcare. This wave is much different from what experts are suggesting that it's almost like a different disease because of the multiple variants that we're now dealing with. And with these new variants, we're seeing more people who are in their 30s, in their 40s being seriously affected and ending up in ICU. Something that wasn't happening early on in the pandemic, where our seniors were being affected and dying.

UFCW Canada Local 1006A General Membership Meeting

April 20, 2021

Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

Wayne Hanley:

And the thing is that, in my opinion, it was predictable for Ontario. Signs were there from around the world. Countries were three to four weeks ahead of Canada in their COVID journey. And in my opinion, Doug Ford could not learn from what was coming down the pipe. He couldn't put people first, he couldn't put lives first. He put his real friends, a business community and corporate profits way too high on his priority list.

Wayne Hanley:

So what does it mean for us on the call here today? We all have to continue to be careful, and we know that. Now more than ever we must continue to do our social distancing wear masks and wash our hands. We're dealing with a different monster of a disease here. So continue to take all the precautions and follow all the protocols that are in place to keep yourself not only safe at work, but also at home and when those in the public. This new form of COVID-19 means health and safety in the workplace is more important now than ever.

Wayne Hanley:

Unfortunately, a number of 1006A members have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and that number continues to increase of our 33,000 members, we fast approaching 1000 members who have tested positive for COVID-19 and that's the ones that we know about. We've only had one member die as a direct result of COVID-19. If you test positive for COVID-19, I encourage you to reach out to your union representative or the union's health and safety representative Rick Young, he'll provide you assistance.

Wayne Hanley:

We're here to help you. Rick and the union reps will help inform you if you, what your rights are and walk you through the resources available and the processes that are available to get you the help when you're feeling overwhelmed, particularly when you're sick. Your local will continue to advocate towards your employer and will continue to advocate towards the government by doing lobbying at all levels for increased pandemic pay reinstatement of pandemic pay, paid sick days, better controls and measures in the workplace, as it relates to health and safety and to priority vaccinations for you. Many of you are essential workers and are on the front lines of the pandemic and have been there for over a year. You deserve all these supports.

Wayne Hanley:

Our members don't have the option of staying at home. So we were successful in ensuring that frontline workers, including grocery transit and food processing workers be vaccinated in phase two of the vaccination process. What we didn't anticipate is the changes in the priorities and how the whole vaccination process would be ever changing. But the rapid spread of the virus and Ford changing his position and positions that we find ourselves in means that we need more immediate action from the provincial government.

Wayne Hanley:

We need the health officials to vaccinate our members now and as soon as possible. So we're calling on Doug Ford, his ministers and local public health officers to implement workplace vaccination sites for

UFCW Canada Local 1006A General Membership Meeting

April 20, 2021

Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

workers at grocery stores and in food processing plants. We've been in discussion with some of our employers and we are supporting the call for workplace mobile vaccination clinics, to make it easier for essential workers to access vaccinations if they so choose.

Wayne Hanley:

And of course, vaccination must be done on a voluntary basis. While we encourage all of our members to get the vaccination, it is a choice. We're calling on Loblaws and other employers to reinstate pandemic pay. Do something to recognize their frontline workers our members, share the wealth. A report in the Toronto Star yesterday, the Western family who own majority interest over 60% of Loblaws, their net worth increased by upwards of \$4.6 billion since the start of the pandemic.

Wayne Hanley:

Why is this crisis so bad in Ontario? On one hand, we don't have domestic production of vaccines like they do in the United States and the UK. And that's why we see our percentage of vaccinated Canadians lagging behind and around the world. In fact, at one time we did, however it was privatized and sold off long ago by the federal conservative government. And on the other hand, we have in my opinion, a colossal of failure by the Ford government to roll out the vaccines in an efficient and effective way to deal with the pandemic. He has refused to implement paid sick days that he abolished when he took office. He's implemented ever-changing toothless stay at home orders, allowing the virus to continue to be spread. The central workers who are most effective are still going to work, still have to go to work.

Wayne Hanley:

The half measures means he keeps reopening the province to quickly prolonging the hardship that many Ontario workers, families, and businesses are facing. So the disastrous management of the whole crisis by the government is a big part of the reason that we find ourselves in a third lockdown. Was he the only one who could not see this third wave coming? It's beyond me. With all the talks about vaccines. I'm curious and I would really like to know what you think in terms of vaccination. So I'm going to pass the meeting over to Glacier for a quick poll.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

Thanks, Wayne. So, while we're in the midst of this third wave, things feel pretty bleak right now. However, there is hope as the vaccination rollout picks up speed. On that note I'd like to start with our second poll of the evening to ask you guys the following question, are you planning to get the COVID vaccine?

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

Press one, if you've already received your first dose of the vaccine. Press two, if you're planning to get the vaccine. Press three, you're still thinking about it and press four, if you're not interested in getting the vaccine. Once again, we're asking you the question, are you planning to get the COVID vaccine? Press one if you've already received your first dose of the vaccine. Press two, if you're planning on getting the vaccine. Three, you're still thinking about it and press four if you're not interested in getting the vaccine.

UFCW Canada Local 1006A General Membership Meeting

April 20, 2021

Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

With vaccination clinics opening in hotspot areas, we encourage you to find out if you live in a hotspot and talk to your family doctor or professional about protecting yourself and your family by getting vaccinated. Keep your eye on the local public health unit website for the ever-changing eligibility criteria and sign up for openings. And if you have trouble with a computer or don't have access ask relative or a friend you trust to help you out.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

So the results are coming in and it looks like the majority of you, 44% are planning to get the vaccine, 27% have already gotten it, 18% are thinking about it and 11% are not interested. So again, based on the poll results, 27% of you have already received your first dose of the vaccine, 44% are planning to get it 18% thinking about it and 11% are not interested in getting the vaccine. So thank you for sharing and I'll turn it back over to Wayne.

Wayne Hanley:

Thanks Glacier. I'm glad to see that over 71% either had it or planning to get it when it becomes available to them or in their areas. So 71% that's encouraging and it probably tracks a little higher than what the public trends are. We have 18% that are, they're still thinking about it. And I would encourage you to talk to your medical professionals and allow their advice to help them guide you to making a decision that's right for you and for the 10 or 11% that are not interested in getting the vaccine. We respect your decision. We're concerned, we want you safe but understand that the vaccines aren't for everybody and we all have to respect each other.

Wayne Hanley:

So thank you and it's encouraging that so many of you are ready to step up and do your part to help eradicate this COVID virus that's floating around. In challenging times is always the important work of the union continues. Our representatives are working hard to represent our members and ensure that your rights and livelihoods are protected and health and safety protocols are followed. If pandemic protocols are not being followed in your workplace, I strongly encourage you to reach out to your union rep right away.

Wayne Hanley:

We're here to help you, and we want to ensure that all members are protected in their workplaces. COVID-19 as I said, certainly dominates the news, but our union continues to do the servicing of our members on a day-to-day basis, although in different ways, by using the telephones and text messaging and emails and, virtual meetings, that a year ago, was a small part of our day-to-day operations in how we conducted business to represent our members, we're doing that now almost exclusively.

Wayne Hanley:

Negotiations have been continuing despite the challenges of the pandemic. And as I said, are being done virtually, which is sometimes challenge, but we're managing our way through it. And I'm proud to report the members of ratified new contracts at NexCycle Plastics in Brampton, Frulact in Kingston, K-Bro Linen

UFCW Canada Local 1006A General Membership Meeting

April 20, 2021

Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

and in the GTA ratified, collective agreement, Essex Linen in Windsor and Compass at Rogers in Toronto, as well as Superette a retail cannabis dispensary in Ottawa have ratified their first collective agreement.

Wayne Hanley:

Our health and safety department has never been busier, and I'm proud to report that our latest online health and safety seminar on understanding COVID-19 vaccines, that was done last month was our largest webinar ever. Thank you for all who attended and made that seminar a success. Our local union scholarship program for continuing education is open once again, we're accepting applications. Each year, we award 42 scholarships worth \$1,006 to our members and or their children or dependents. And I would encourage you to check out the website to get more information and apply for scholarships.

Wayne Hanley:

Our education and training department has held three online seminars for new stewards. So far, it's been a great success, drawing stewards from a variety of sectors. And I'm pleased to see our stewards base grow as new members step up for the challenge of being a union steward. For those of you on the call, who might not know this, your union steward volunteer their time and help coworkers on the shop floor with questions about their union contract, health and safety issues, and more, and certainly have direct access and quick access to the union representatives.

Wayne Hanley:

The stewards really are the frontline workers and the eyes and ears of the union in your workplace. And for those of you on the line tonight, who are Stewards, I offer my sincere thanks on behalf of 1006A members for all that you do to help and support and protect your fellow coworkers, thank you very much. I'll be turning the call over to Glacier for our next segment, which will delve into one of the the great organizing successes that we had just a couple of months ago. Glacier.

Glacier Effe-Samuel:

Thanks, Wayne. So recently local 1006A was proud to welcome to our union family, the newest members from Tokyo Smoke cannabis dispensary in Stony Creek. I don't know how many of you know, but your UFCW is the union for cannabis workers, representing cannabis, retail stores, and marijuana growing facilities in Canada, and in the US. Today I'm proud to welcome one of our members from Tokyo Smoke who helped unionize to workplace. Welcome, please, Kathleen Quinn.

Kathleen Quinn:

Thank you so much for having me tonight and happy 420 everyone.

Glacier Effe-Samuel:

Thank you, Kathleen. Looking forward to it. So Kathleen, what is it like to work in the cannabis industry?

Kathleen Quinn:

Well, it's really exciting to be on the edge of this budding industry. There are some key differences from the legacy market, or as others may know it, the gray market and the legal market. The legal market has changed how we speak and think about the use and sale of recreational cannabis. Despite having a

UFCW Canada Local 1006A General Membership Meeting

April 20, 2021

Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

wealth of knowledge from the legacy market, what we can say is heavily restricted on the retail side to exclude any medical or lifestyle type language versus the indigenous dispensaries, so you can speak openly about these things. The industry is also young and the majority of workers I encounter are under 30, which poses a unique challenge. So they're trying to understand what they're entitled to.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

So some would say that signing a union card is easy. However you want to above and beyond. What prompted you to step up and assist your coworkers to unionize? And what was the experience like?

Kathleen Quinn:

So my coworkers started the drive because of favouritism, harassment and bullying in our workplace. But I assisted because I found there was so much more missing. Health and safety was a joke, and we're at a higher risk of violence due to robbery. We didn't even have fire extinguishers. Some places I know of were told to use paper towels and rubber bands instead of masks, because they wouldn't buy PPE.

Kathleen Quinn:

I have a degree in labour and I'm doing my post-grad and human resource management. I want people to know their rights and what they were entitled to. They weren't paying overtime or proper holiday pay. And the benefits we had weren't really benefits at all. Once the employer knew we were unionizing, they tried all sorts of propaganda and tactics, but it didn't work because the knowledge I possessed helped poke holes in their arguments. I believe that logic was why we were successful and able to remain strong.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

That's amazing, Kathleen. Can you tell us how you and your coworkers felt and what you did after hearing that all the hard work paid off and that you and your coworkers won the vote to be unionized?

Kathleen Quinn:

My coworkers were very happy to see tangible changes and were also anxious to bargain. It isn't easy organizing and it's stressful. So it was nice to be able to celebrate coming together with cupcakes. I'm currently working with others in the industry, and we formed a group called the United Weed Workers to support other stores and greenhouses, trying to organize. We see a huge need for better standards because weed is becoming like Walmart. We just launched our toolkit today on 420 at unitedweedworkers.com. And I really wanted to say thank you to the continued support from the UFCW especially 1006A. If you want to help or no more, we always have the session over Zoom. We have a backing from some celebrities as well. So be sure to check out the campaign again, it's unitedweedworkers.com.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

I would say bring some of those cupcakes to your first round of bargaining, it probably will help. Thank you so much for joining us today Kathleen. And remember if you know, anyone who could benefit from union representation, our organizing team can be reached at gounionatufcwufcw1006a.ca or by visiting our website ufcw1006a.ca. I'd like to also remind, our members on the line that operators are standing

UFCW Canada Local 1006A General Membership Meeting

April 20, 2021

Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

by to take down your questions, press star three to ask a question. And once again, I want to thank you very much for joining us tonight Kathleen.

Kathleen Quinn:

Thank you for having me.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

I'll pass it back over to Wayne.

Wayne Hanley:

Thanks, Glacier. All workers in all sectors of the economy deserve respect and a voice at work. We're so proud of the voice of the workers, the strong voice of workers in the cannabis sector. And thank you, Kathleen for your participation and your comments and welcome to 1006A. 1006A has been a leader in trying to organize agricultural workers in the cannabis industry. We do have a challenge in the province of Ontario where agricultural workers are barred from joining unions. They don't have the right of every other worker in Ontario in 1006A as leading a challenge to the court's right now that we hope will have those laws overturned. It's a long process. We've been at it now for more than four years, but that's what we're up against.

Wayne Hanley:

There are opportunities for retail cannabis workers to unite, to seek union representation. We'll do our part to ensure that those rights are upheld and to help those workers. So, thanks again, Kathleen. As some of you may know, next month, the month of May is Asian heritage month and more and more our Asian Canadians sisters and brothers and friends are facing acts of violence and discrimination. According to recent data, there has been over 900 incidents of anti-Asian hate crimes across Canada as of March 17th. And I think we know the reasons why, we've seen this increase.

Wayne Hanley:

Since the start of the pandemic hate crimes against Asian Canadians have risen. Stats Canada reported that the proportion of visible minorities has experienced an increase in harassment or attacks based on their race, ethnicity, or skin colour has tripled and that is shameful. That is why you have UFCW is adding our voice to stop Asian hate movement. Racism and discrimination must be stopped in its tracks. So racism and violent incidents against members of the Asian community is unacceptable. And we must stand up in solidarity with each other for equality and justice for all.

Wayne Hanley:

Finally in my report, I want to recognize the strong activism from our local unions women's issue network or what we referred to as our WIN members. Thanking them and recognizing their work on International Women's Day and Equal Pay Day. Thank you for taking part in social media campaigns to bring the awareness to issues faced by many of our members, including violence against women and that 30% gender wage gap between men and women. And now I'd like to turn the meeting over to Dan Gilbert Executive Assistant to the President for our next segment on mental health. Dan, take it away.

UFCW Canada Local 1006A General Membership Meeting

April 20, 2021

Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

Dan Gilbert:

Thank you, Wayne. Good evening, everyone on the call with us tonight. For many of you who have been on previous calls, you've heard us talk about how the pandemic has led to vast mental health challenges for our membership. We've had many members who are dealing with several challenges simultaneously. Whether it's reduced hours, increased workloads, closures, or shut downs, safety concerns about themselves or their loved ones. And unfortunately the loss of loved ones. It's definitely been a trying time for all of us in one way or another. Tonight we are pleased to have with us 1006A steward Kallisha Hoyes. Kallisha was recently featured on a CTV special during the Bell Let's Talk Day and was featured in Maclean's magazine's recent year one issue. Welcome to the call, Kallisha.

Kallisha Hoyes:

Thank you, Dan, Wayne and Glacier for the opportunity to speak to our membership tonight. I really appreciate it.

Dan Gilbert:

Thank you, Kallisha for being here and taking time out of your busy schedule. Kallisha you work on the front lines in a No Frills location, you're deemed an essential worker during this pandemic, you've been dealing with the public every day. Can you tell us a little bit about the impact this pandemic has had on your mental health?

Kallisha Hoyes:

Well, because of the type of jobs that I have, I was extremely thankful that I was able to work throughout the entire pandemic. And when I say thankful, obviously I'm more so speaking from the side of being able to make an income and being able to support my household, because I know that that wasn't the case for a lot of our members and people that I know. So with that, because my work was so constant and because I was always working overtime and the store was a lot busier than normal. It did take me a second to notice the signs that I have noticed in the past when I was battling with depression. This pandemic and all the ripples that caused being homeschooling my children, having a big fear of infecting my older loved ones that watched my children. It's been a really big trigger for me, this whole pandemic. It's been a really big trigger to my mental health.

Dan Gilbert:

Triggers a good word, I think Kallisha. Because there are certainly a lot more triggers for us now over the last year with this pandemic that are leading or lead people to mental health concerns and issues. What about your coworkers? I assume that it's safe to say that many have been impacted in a similar fashion as you have, and being a steward can be a rewarding experience, but also a difficult experience in the best of times. This pandemic has brought on a wide range of new issues and concerns that members may come to you with. I'm assuming it only adds to your stress level?

Kallisha Hoyes:

You will be definitely be right by saying that. Oftentimes a lot of my coworkers do turn to me and come to me for different challenges that they're going through, especially during this pandemic. And we all look at each other like family and tend to go and talk to each other a lot and share a personal story. But

UFCW Canada Local 1006A General Membership Meeting

April 20, 2021

Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

as their steward, they do tend to come to me a lot more often, especially when they're facing issues at work or with their health and what they're going through. And in the normal situation, it was a lot, but I was more able to deal with it, but now being thrust into being a frontline worker through working through this pandemic, it definitely does put on a lot more added stress.

Kallisha Hoyes:

It's kind of hard to not take on some of the stress that they're going through when they're sharing these stories with me, it's hard not to take it on. So, as much as I do enjoy talking and sharing stories, it truly does, like I'm a people person, I enjoy it. But for me during this pandemic, speaking to my coworkers about these things and what they're going through, I just think it's a really good way of showing each other that we really are in this together and we're all here going through the same thing.

Dan Gilbert:

I like your term family that you used with your coworkers at the store. It's definitely great when you can say that you have that family type environment at work because many people, they don't, they can't say the same thing. Work is just the job for them and they don't see their coworkers as being a support for them in times of need. It makes having a conversation in these times, much more easier.

Dan Gilbert:

I recently saw a post on my Facebook feed and it read, "If you don't take time for your wellness, you will be forced to make time for your illness." And I think it's pretty profound statement that many of us really don't take to heart or many of us don't think about. There's too much going on for us to take the time, to think about our own mental wellbeing. Through your various media interviews, I get a sense that you do take the time. So what are some of your coping mechanisms or distressors and do you share them with your coworkers?

Kallisha Hoyes:

Yeah, for me, I definitely, I do share them with my coworkers. I've had so many people that have come up to me about things that they're going through and I've literally suggested what I've done for myself. And what I've found has been working for myself through the pandemic, and it's basically, I enjoy, like I tell myself I have to do two things for myself every week, that's just for me to make me happy. And it doesn't have to be anything big, it could be something as simple as making something new that I've never cooked before, or just spending a couple hours binge watching the new series I heard about or reading a new book, like anything that just makes me happy for Kallisha, like that's what I do.

Kallisha Hoyes:

And I've shared that with my coworkers and they've even come back to me and said that they've noticed a difference in how they're feeling. So I just definitely found that by doing that personally, like it just started to give me something to almost look forward to something that was different throughout this pandemic. Something to just some kind of change other than the routine that my life was starting to become.

UFCW Canada Local 1006A General Membership Meeting

April 20, 2021

Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

Dan Gilbert:

I think that's great advice, Kallisha. I think we all need something, that we can lose ourselves in or immerse ourselves in for a little while just to take our mind off of everything that we're faced with, over this last year and a bit on a daily basis. You mentioned binge-watching a new series or something like that. I can certainly say, I have lost an entire Sunday with Netflix and I'm not sure if that is taking things too far or not, but it has definitely helped me.

Kallisha Hoyes:

That's definitely me as well. I wasn't a Netflix person before the pandemic at all.

Dan Gilbert:

Yeah, yeah. I think it's helped a lot of people over the last year and a bit. But through it all through all of what we're dealing with, you have taken on the challenge with various media requests to tell your story when asked by your local union 1006A. With all the added stress and anxiety that you're experiencing, why not just say, sorry, I just don't have the time or energy. We certainly couldn't blame you if that were your answer to the request.

Kallisha Hoyes:

You know for me, when I became a steward, it was something that it resonated with me. So the type of person that I am. I care about my people, I care about my employees. I went to school for HR, so it was right up my alley when I became a steward and I learned everything that the union was doing for us. So for me, it's just, it's important. It's important to be a steward, it's important to speak up when it comes to mental health. And especially now with everything that we're facing, like we're all going through so much things.

Kallisha Hoyes:

I think it's important to be able to talk and have stories and conversations with our family and our friends. Oftentimes I find even just talking to a family member or a friend, it can help. Even if it's just simply getting something off your chest and being able to speak about it with someone close to you, sometimes you're not even looking for advice, you're just looking for an ear. So I find it important, I don't think that like, it's not in me to sit down, especially not during a time like this. I think this is the time that we need to push ourselves and share our stories and talk to one another. I just think it's so important right now.

Dan Gilbert:

Thanks Kallisha, I agree with you 100%. I think there are way too many people out there that don't feel comfortable about talking about their own mental health health, and the challenges they're facing. So again, thank you for stepping up and telling your story when asked and hopefully making a connection to those individuals that may help them in their journey. And once again, thank you for joining us tonight.

Kallisha Hoyes:

No problem, no problem. Thank you guys for having me.

UFCW Canada Local 1006A General Membership Meeting

April 20, 2021

Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

Dan Gilbert:

And I'll just end with, for all of our members on the call tonight, as Kallisha said, it's important to talk about the challenges you're facing. There is help out there, so make sure to reach out to your family, your friends professionals, like your doctors, if you need help. And remember, again like Kallisha mentioned, listening to each other can also be one of the most powerful things you can do during this time. You don't necessarily have to fix other people's problems or try to make them feel better. Sometimes people just appreciate being heard and knowing that they are not alone.

Dan Gilbert:

If you are feeling alone and helpless, let family and friends know, be kind to yourself and to others. This is a difficult time for everyone. Give yourself permission to take time, to figure it out. Challenge worrying thoughts and accept that experiencing some fear is normal. For those that may be in immediate crisis, you can contact Crisis Services Canada at crisisservicecanada.ca or call 1.833.456.4566 They are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Once again, that's crisisservicescanada.ca. On our website you will also find some of the many free mental health resources available. And the website address again is UFCW1006a.ca. I'd like to thank Kallisha again for joining us and thank you for the conversation. I'll now turn things back over to Glacier.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

I just like to say that I'm so proud of our 1006A activists. I know Kathleen and Kallisha, you just shared messages of perseverance and strength and support for your coworkers. And it's a good thing to hear fellow coworkers, fellow members, like looking out for each other in that way. Thank you ladies, both for participating on the town hall tonight. I'd like to remind everyone again that if you stay with us for the entire meeting, you'll have a chance to enter in a membership contest. The winner will receive a Samsung tablet, so stay till the end and Wayne I'll hand it back over to you.

Wayne Hanley:

Thanks Glacier. And thank you Kallisha for sharing your experiences and ideas to face and combat mental health challenges. The stigma that so often surrounds mental health, that festers in the dark. So thank you for your courage and bring those issues to light and sharing your story with us. We've come to the part of the meeting where typically we answer some of the questions. And as Glacier said earlier in the meeting if we don't touch specifically on your questions or questions that are directly related to issues was in your workplace, your union rep will get back to you within 24 hours. And there are a number of questions that fall into that category.

Wayne Hanley:

Few comments and I take them to heart, about the politics. Is this a political rally or union meeting? My comments tonight were more political. I recognize that and am determined that the politics behind COVID-19 and what's going on out there right now. And the decisions are being made that are driven by politics and privilege and needs to be talked about because it is a real issue and it's a real challenge.

UFCW Canada Local 1006A General Membership Meeting

April 20, 2021

Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

Wayne Hanley:

So I don't apologize for any of the comments, I believe in the comments that I made tonight, but I do take heart that this is a union meeting, and you want to hear about issues affecting our members. Certainly the COVID-19 is affecting our members, so the backstory is important. With respect to pandemic pay, restoring pandemic pay, I can tell you that I continually have regular conversations with executives from corporations. Two weeks ago I was on a conference call with Michael McCain from Maple Leaf Food, along with the other local union presidents from across the country, as well as our National President, Paul Meinema. And one of the topics that we talked about was pandemic pay, not only specifically for our workers who make the food and the reinstatement of a pandemic pay, but how all employers have dropped the ball on that.

Wayne Hanley:

So we are having those dialogues as you all know that it's not a collective agreement obligation, it was done on a temporary, without prejudice basis. So the decision to pay pandemic pay is left up to employers. We're certainly advocating for it. Kudos to Sobeys and Metro who have stepped up in their ways. And shame on those who haven't recognized our frontline workers, the way they should.

Wayne Hanley:

We've also had some comments or some questions about the police acts and with the union paying tickets for pulled over by police. I think the issue that came out at the end of last week, the police would be doing spot checks and pulling people over has been addressed in the media. We're not going to see that police state, kudos to the police departments for standing up and saying they were not going to do it, and having the government backed down on those. So that really is not an issue with respect to our members getting tickets.

Wayne Hanley:

We do encourage though, you to stay close to home, don't be out in public if you don't have to. Practice, all the protocols that go with being responsible. I think that touches on most of the comments and questions. Some of the questions were answered in my comments that were posted before. I finished my remarks, sick days is something that perhaps there's a little bit of a crack that we may see the Ontario government do it, but it depends on the who's making announcements from Queens Park. Don't build up hope until an official announcement comes up, but we certainly are advocating and we'll continue to do that and work with the politicians who will listen.

Wayne Hanley:

So I think that kind of addresses those and brings us close to a wrap up Glacier. I would, before I close remind you that April 28 is the Day of Mourning where we recognize and we remember workers that have been killed on the job. Workers that have been injured on the job who have died as result of workplace injuries or illnesses. This April 28th is an important Day of Mourning. And I would ask it on the 28th that you keep the thoughts of workers and the families of workers who have lost a loved one to a workplace illness or accident, or a COVID death in your thought during the April the 28th.

UFCW Canada Local 1006A General Membership Meeting
April 20, 2021
Telephone Town Hall Event Transcript

Wayne Hanley:

So, thanks Glacier. For those who are listening in tonight, I want to thank you for joining us. As the summer months approach, remember there will be and perhaps there is an ending in sight for COVID. It looks like it's a bit of a moving target, it's a little bit further down the road. Many of us will be able to get our first vaccine dose by the summer. And hopefully most of us will be vaccinated by the end of September. This is our hope, we hope that hope comes true. In the meantime, know that your union to be there for you, be safe, be well until we chat again, all the best. Glacier.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

Thank you so much, Wayne. So before we say goodnight, I just want to remind you that if we weren't able to answer your question, I think Wayne run to the majority, but if we weren't able to get to your question tonight, your union rep will get back to you within 24 hours. You can find the rep's information on our website at ufcw1006a.ca and click on the find your rep button. Also remember that an 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 you to review, but to be approved during the next meeting, which is scheduled on Tuesday, August 17th, so right in the middle or end of summer.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

So before we close, I want to go on to the final poll for the contest to win the Samsung tablet, to enter in the contest for the Samsung tablet, press one on your telephone keypad. The winner will be announced on our website tomorrow by 3:00 PM. And once again, if you want to enter into the contest, press one on your phone and the winner will be announced tomorrow on our website at 3:00 PM.

Glacier Effs-Samuel:

Please let any members know who couldn't make it on the call tonight, that there will be a recording posted on our website tomorrow as well. And again, the website is ufcw1006a.ca. Thank you all for joining us tonight. One more thing, for those who would like to leave a question or comment, please stay on the line for that. And so thank you again for joining us tonight. Stay safe everybody, stay vigilant, protect yourself and have a good evening, take care.