

Zoom Into the General Meeting

The Executive of Local 38 has made the decision to continue with on-line meetings for the near future.

The September 26, 2023 Regular Membership meeting will be held through an on-line Zoom meeting. We encourage every *card-carrying member* to contact the office for the specific details to attend the meeting.

In an attempt to balance the confidentiality of the meeting with access for our members, we are asking the following:

1. Contact the Union Office at 403-233-2700 or office@cupe38.org to obtain the access code for the meeting.
2. When entering the Zoom meeting, please ensure your camera is on and that you identify yourself. We will need to confirm and record the name of all attendees. If a participant cannot be identified, they will be removed from the meeting.
3. Once the meeting starts, attendees will be given the instruction to turn off their camera if they desire to improve bandwidth.
4. If speaking, please activate your camera so other delegates can see who is speaking.

I want to thank everyone for their understanding. While we prefer in-person meetings, to ensure the health and safety of our members, on-line meetings are needed to continue the democratic operations of our Local.



Bargaining Begins

At the end of the year your collective agreement will expire. Accordingly, we will be notifying the City of our intention to negotiate a new collective agreement. The Alberta Labour Code sets out specific timelines and conditions for bargaining. Specifically, we are now entering the timeframe to serve notice to the Employer. Once we have served notice, the City and your Negotiating Committee will have a specified time to meet to exchange proposals.

Local 38 elected a Negotiating Committee in June, and we have spent time developing and distributing a member survey over the summer months. To date, we have received a very positive response rate from the membership.

The Committee will be finalizing proposals to be presented at the September Regular Meeting for ratification. Proposals are developed after reviewing the survey results and comments, reviewing grievances over the past two years, and reviewing feedback from members to the Union office over the life of the last contract.

It will come as no surprise that wage increases figure predominantly in all of our communications with members. August inflation is sitting near 4.8%, higher than the national average. Bank of Canada interest rates are significantly increasing, creating upward pressure on mortgage rates. City Council is grappling with the affordable housing crisis, as rental costs continue to skyrocket.

Electricity prices continue to increase overall household costs. In fact, electricity prices are at their historic levels. Food prices are escalating; energy prices are escalating; gas prices are hovering at historic highs. All of this has created massive household pressures for our members.

Coupled with the financial pressures, the City has not properly staffed many areas of operations. Demanding workload is the inevitable outcome of years of staffing cuts and staffing freezes. The City has returned to the treadmill approach to hiring. Instead of filling positions on a permanent basis, they try to rotate through temporary staff. The City faced a large number of retirements, in part due to the clawback of the vacation retirement bonus. Now the organization is suffering from a loss of institutional knowledge and capacity. All of these factors create increasing workload and turmoil in the organization.

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Bargaining Begins

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We were just getting through the ill-advised and rushed staffing cuts of the 2017 – 2019 downturn, just to be hit with the COVID shutdown, further cuts came. While in the shutdown, the City embarked on a massive organization re-alignment. Irrespective of whether this was needed, the timing of the re-alignment added even greater stress to an already exhausted workforce.

All of this left members overwhelmed, confused, and demoralized.

The good news is that the economy has recovered over the past several years. Emerging from the pandemic, we have seen a bump in the economic activity. The Alberta Government declared that Alberta has the best economic fundamentals in the country with a young, highly skilled workforce, the highest weekly earnings among provinces, some of the lowest home prices and rents in large urban centres, and the lowest overall taxes in Canada. Further, the Alberta government forecasts steady GDP growth in 2024 and beyond. All of this indicates a bargaining round focused on strong wage increases.

Unions across the country are pushing back against the austerity measures. Whether it is Autoworkers, Federal workers, teaching assistants, pilots, transportation workers and others, workers across the country are demanding fair settlements. Our members have clearly told us that they are determined to fight for a fair and equitable settlement.

We will need members to be united behind your Negotiating Committee as we head in to this round of bargaining.

The top three reasons you should attend a Local 38 Regular Meeting

For many, September signals the end of summer vacation and the return to the routine of school, work and... union meetings.

Whether you are a new or seasoned Local 38 member, you may have seen general membership meetings advertised in the monthly CUPE Connection and wondered – should I bother to attend?

While it can be difficult to find extra time in your schedule, here's why Regular Meetings are a valuable investment:

Connect with fellow Local 38 members

There are over 5,500 Local 38 members spanning The City of Calgary, Enmax and the Calgary Parking Authority. With such a diverse and widespread membership base, it can be difficult to meet colleagues and stay in the know about what's happening across different work areas.

Membership meetings are a great way to connect with fellow Local 38 members – who you might otherwise not have met – and learn about issues from across the corporation.

And, who knows - as you continue to learn more about these issues and the work of the union, you may be inspired to become a shop steward, or a member of one of Local 38's committees.

Have your voice heard

Have you ever wondered – how are my union dues used and how are these decisions made?

There's no better way to have your say and stay engaged in the work of the union than to attend general membership meetings.

Attending union meetings allows your voice to be heard on important issues that affect members and is an opportunity to vote on union matters such as financial expenditures. You'll also have an opportunity to ask questions of the union officers and raise any items of new business that you would like to discuss.

Be the first to know about important updates

By attending meetings, you'll receive first-hand information about key issues, such as Collective Agreement negotiations. As we enter into another round of bargaining with The City, attending meetings is the best way to stay up to date with progress and ask questions of the bargaining team.

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THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH



“To make a difference in someone's life you don't have to be brilliant, rich, beautiful, or perfect. You just have to care.”

~Mandy Hale

Sick On Vacation?

It's come to CUPE Local 38's attention that the City of Calgary has a policy around requesting vacation hours back if a member ends up sick while on vacation. Unfortunately, you won't find this policy anywhere in your onboarding documents, in the MEBAC Benefits Agreement or on the City's Employee Resource pages online. However, through the experience of our members that have encountered this situation, CUPE Local 38 hopes to provide some insight into the process and how to request vacation hours be reversed.

Vacation is a time where you should be able to put work aside, physically and mentally, and enjoy time with family and friends. Sadly, some folks have their vacation impacted by health-related incidents that prevent them from fully benefitting from their vacation leave. Should an incident or illness occur while you are on vacation leave, the first step is to see a doctor and have the visit documented with a doctor's note. The note must indicate the date of the visit, as well as any required down-time needed to recover from the illness or injury.

Upon returning to the workplace from your vacation leave, you will need to contact your HRBP or Payroll Administrator to request that some or all of your vacation hours be reinstated and the reason for the request. You will need to make this request within 5 working days of your return to work. A Benefits Liaison will access the information and documentation provided and advise on their determination. They will either agree to reinstate the vacation, or they will deny the application and provide a reason why it's being denied. If the vacation hours are reversed, your time in HCM should show S & A leave instead of the vacation leave.

The doctor's note is really your only evidence that you were ill or injured during the vacation time, and the employer will rely on this to make their decision. The employer will only consider reinstating vacation time from the first date that medical attention was sought. They, typically, will not reinstate vacation hours prior to the doctor's note.

It's important to note that this is not part of the MEBAC Benefits Agreement, but something the employer has implemented as part of their payroll policy. In addition, the employer has not provided the Union any details as to what other items may be necessary to apply for this reinstatement of hours.

While the Union supports the concept of this benefit, we believe the details should be clearly communicated for all employees of the City of Calgary. Should you encounter this situation, and have met the criteria above, but are still denied the benefit, please contact our office to discuss at 403-233-2700.

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Day – Events

With the end of the month fast approaching, we are coming up to the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Day on September 30. While some folks see this as another stat holiday, the intent of the proclamation of this day becoming a national holiday was to honour the lost children and survivors of the residential school system. It is intended to provide a time for focused reflection and learning about the struggles of a dark time in our country's history. The impacts of these events on the Indigenous Peoples is ongoing, and as a society we need to understand these impacts and learn how to work toward a better, more equitable future for all members of society.

There are many events that are happening in and around the City of Calgary, and the list grows larger each year. Here is a brief summary of events you can participate in to acknowledge Truth and Reconciliation Day. These are a small fraction of events, check your community newsletter for events near you. Many events occur all through the year, and we encourage all our members to reach out to the organizers to find out how you can get involved, meet the community and provide support.

Calgary Public Library - Presentation Event with Cadmus Delorme: What We Inherited and Better Understanding Our Role in Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action.

Friday, September 29, 2023 from 12:30pm to 1:30pm - Film Screening of Beans

Free viewing of the film *Beans*, directed by Tracey Deer with special remarks from Calgary Public Library CEO Sarah Meilleur and University of Calgary's Dr. Shawna Cunningham, Director of the University's Indigenous Strategy. A discussion with director, Shawna Deer, Kelli Morning Bull and Autumn Eaglespeaker will follow the film. **Friday, September 29, 2023 from 6:30pm to 9:00pm**

City Hall to Shaw Millennium Park - Pokaiiks - The Children Commemorative Walk and Gathering 2023

A tribute to survivors of the Residential School System and Sixties Scoop, held annually. The walk will begin at City Hall at 11:00am and will follow a route along Stephen Avenue and conclude at Shaw Millennium Park. This will be followed by traditional drumming and dancing performances, remarks from members of the Indigenous community, artisan and community booths, as well as food and beverage offerings. Wear your orange t-shirt! **Saturday, September 30, 2023 from 11:00am to 4:00pm**

Bob Bahan Pool and Soccer Field - 3rd Annual Traditional Pow Wow in recognition of Truth and Reconciliation Day

Tee Pee with Elder, Bouncy Castle, Face Painting and Craft Table. **Saturday, September 30, 2023 from 12:30pm to 5pm**

Fort Calgary - Orange Shirt Day

A day to confront and reflect on the colonial history of Fort Calgary. Learn about the ongoing work to decolonize the stories we tell and share insights on what we have learned about reconciliation so far. Free museum admission, walking tours, family friendly crafts. A screening of the film *Bones of Crows*. **Saturday, September 30, 2023 from 11am to 1pm (screening of film begins at 2pm)**

The top three reasons you should attend a Local 38 Regular Meeting

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During every general meeting, the union officers provide updates on their activities over the past month. This includes active grievances, investigations and arbitrations, as well as any other issues of note. With the diversity of work areas and jobs across Enmax, The City and CPA, it can be a truly eye-opening experience to learn about the types of issues affecting fellow Local 38 members.

There's no better way to stay connected with union colleagues, have your voice heard and keep up to date with important issues than to attend general membership meetings.

Membership meetings are open to all card-carrying members of Local 38. They are held virtually via Zoom, typically on the fourth Tuesday of the month, from September to June.

To join our email list for future meetings, or to sign up for your membership card, contact the Local 38 office at office@cupe38.org.

Save on Your Home and Auto Insurance with CUPE 38

CUPE 38 is refreshing their partnership with Brokerlink to provide our members with savings on their home and auto insurance. Recognizing the increased costs that all of us are facing on some of our most basic needs, it's more important than ever to find savings whenever we can.



Brokerlink is applying group buying power to provide savings to our members and we encourage everyone to reach out to them for a no-obligation quote. The demographic of our membership reflects stable, responsible, gainfully employed people...who wouldn't want us as clients?

Check out the Brokerlink ad attached to this newsletter and use the QR code or email to request a quote. You do not require your membership number or card, just use the links provided in the ad.



Queen Elizabeth II Day of Mourning Update

On September 8, 2022, Queen Elizabeth II passed away at the age of 96, after reigning 70 years. The Queen was the longest-serving monarch in British history, and was the only Canadian Head of State for over three generations. On September 13th, the Federal government declared a Day of Mourning and encouraged all Canadians to take time to reflect and honour the passing of the Queen.

The City immediately announced that they would not align with the declaration of the Federal government on the Day of Mourning, and instead left it to Supervisors to determine if members could "watch the ceremonies" while at work.

CUPE Local 38, along with all of the municipal unions, challenged this decision. It is our view that the collective agreement language required the City treat September 19th like any other general holiday. The language in all of the City agreements is the same in this respect.

As we know, the City did not relent on this, and all employees were required to attend work. Few, if any, were able to watch the ceremonies. In other words, the City viewed this as another day at the office.

Since the City required staff to attend work on September 19th, it is our view that they are obligated to compensate every employee as they would any other legal holiday.

This grievance is being heard on September 20th before an external Arbitrator. The substance of the case will turn upon the interpretation of the language of Article 203. We have been able to trace the language in the Article as far back as 1965, and it has been modified for the August Civic holiday, Family Day, Easter Sunday and the ½ working day before Christmas Day in the years between 1965 and 2022.

Ultimately, the grievance will likely turn on an interpretation by the Arbitrator on the definitions of "proclaimed", "and/or", and statutory holiday vs. legal holiday vs. general holiday.

We expect that the decision on this case should be coming within the next two months.



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REGULAR MEMBERSHIP MEETING

*All CUPE 38 Card Carrying Members
Invited to Attend*



When: Tuesday, September 26, 2023
at 7:00 p.m.

Where: Via ZOOM
(SEE FRONT PAGE FOR DETAILS)

Business: Regular & Elections

ELECTIONS:

1. One (1) Trustee —Term to 2024
2. One (1) Member to the Public Relations & Education Committee
3. One (1) Member to the Equal Opportunities Committee
4. One (1) Member to the Occupational Health & Safety Committee
5. One (1) Member to the Social Committee

IMPORTANT NOTICE

**City of Calgary Bargaining Proposals will be ratified at
this meeting**

ADVANCE NOTICE

***The October Regular Membership meeting will be held on
Tuesday, October 17, 2023 at 7:00 pm via Zoom***