

Telephone Town Hall – February 23, 2023 @ 7 p.m.

1. **Meeting called to order** at 7:04 pm by Dan Goodman.
2. **Roll Call of officers:**
Dan Goodman, **President**; Charles Pratt, **Secretary-Treasurer**; Margaret Robins, **VP #1**; Alicia Whitehead, **VP #2**; Susan Espin, **VP #3**; Sandra Geldart, **VP #7**; David Mowatt, **VP #8**; Doug Insley, **VP #11**; Dawn Stevenson, **VP #12**; Dale Juvelin, **VP #13**;
3. **Adoption of Agenda**
m / s / c to adopt the agenda
4. **Adoption of November 29, 2022 Minutes** as posted on UFCW 247 website
m / s / c to adopt the minutes
5. **President's Report**
 - Our Executive Board's Vice-President's #10 position which was vacated by David Haere late last year, as a result of him leaving his employment with the Real Canadian Superstore has been filled. Under the International Constitution, when a vacancy occurs in the officers of a Local, it is filled by the Local Union Executive Board. The Board unanimously approved Kirste Hawgood to fill the position for the balance of the term. Kirste is from Kamloops and has been at the Safeway Kamloops for 12 years, currently in the Seafood Department. She is a Shop Steward, has been involved in our fundraising efforts with the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society and recently ran our Christmas movie night held last December in Kamloops. Kirste will be sworn in at our next Executive Board meeting. We want to thank her for accepting this role and also thank David Haere for his time on the Board.
 - An update on our transition to the UnionWare Operating Software. We just signed the contract. We have created a staff committee for this conversion process to ensure that each module or program is customized to what we want and need. This will ensure that as start to create and map out our customization, the finished product will be what we require. We have assigned staff to the following topics: Communication & events module, grievance module, membership module (which is the core of the UnionWare platform). We also have someone for the finance side of the membership module and the contracts module. In January, we had UnionWare demo each module for each committee member, so we had a better understanding of how it worked, and these demos were extremely helpful. The next step, which we are currently in now is making notes and identifying the needs for our customization. We are scheduled to have a follow up meeting in March. We'll continue to provide updates.
 - Our bulletin Board changes in our Superstores is almost complete, showcasing a new brighter look with an emphasis on more current information that could be frequently updated. It has been well received. Our new member orientation booklet is getting closer to completion. This booklet will be a great conversation starter and an important part of the engagement process. New employees need to know that they are union members as soon as possible. We are developing a program to have a fellow union member present them the book and welcome them as a union member.
 - We had Safeway bargaining proposal meetings in January that included members from all geographical areas of the province. The members who attended were from the different classification; meatcutters, meat wrappers, deli clerks and seafood clerks from stores throughout the province. The bargaining committee was chosen from the group who attended and

volunteered to be part of the negotiation process to represent their coworkers. At the meetings, we went through the proposals submitted and also had a presentation on the pension plan from Stephanie Griffith of Bisland Griffith, the administrators of the pension plan. The first week of bargaining was held February 6 to 10th. After the opening statements and the exchange of proposals, we began discussing the non-monetary items. At this early stage, you spend quite a bit of time clarifying and asking questions on the proposal packages, so we would hope to see more movement at the next negotiation meetings booked for February 27 to March 3. We also have additional dates for later in March. Health & Safety issues and the concern over proper in-store health and safety committee meetings taking place was raised at the bargaining table and we have requested further information from the employer for those members that work in an Appendix B store, of which there are 7 remaining. The John Hall Award expires March 31 and at that point it is our position that those stores should return to the full collective agreement.

- Safeway recently had meetings in stores to update members on the November IT breach. Any member whose private information may have been compromised would've additionally received a letter at home outlining the Company's investigation. The Company has provided a phone number should employees want to follow up in any way.
- Local 1518 was successful at a recent grievance and arbitration with both Overwaitea Foods and Safeway regarding cost of living (COLA) language in their collective agreement. We were a party to the arbitration and also have had discussions with Safeway on the matter as we have the identical language. Both Companies have appealed the arbitrator's decision, so we are awaiting the results of the appeal. The language talked about a rather complicated calculation that could have resulted in a small lump sum payment to top-rated members. We will post an update once we have the appeal decision.
- We recently completed the elections for delegates to the upcoming UFCW International Convention. We had reduced the number of delegates via mail-in ballot, and we will actually be sending an even smaller delegation. This event takes place in April.
- Union Representatives Tima Dickerson & Mike Toll both held open house style meetings at Superstores in their territories. Tima had in-store meet & greets in the Grandview Hwy and Delta Superstores with the focus on providing members a chance to meet new Shop Stewards. Tima commented that she was able to meet and connect with many more members than usual store servicing allows. She also was made aware of issues that she may not have heard about otherwise. It resulted in more members signing up for Shop Steward training or expressing interest in getting involved with the Union in other ways. The Store Managers at both locations allowed us to use the boardroom so there was a nice space provided for everyone. The Union provided sandwiches and the store donated beverages and snacks. Also last week, Mike Toll held a similar get together for the Abbotsford Superstore members in a hotel right across the street from the Store as there are several ongoing issues that were best discussed outside the location.
- We plan to do more of these events as they are an excellent opportunity to engage with members and provide them information on the Local. We even had some FG Deli members from the area drop in and say Hi in the Abbotsford meet & greet. There was a major Health & Safety incident at the FG Deli plant on Friday, February 10th involving an ammonia leak at the facility in Langley around 12:30 pm. Emergency crews were on site. Fortunately, no one was hurt. The plant was ordered closed while worksafe carried out their investigation and the Company began repairs and clean up. We've been in constant contact with WorkSafe BC. Members were being gradually recalled starting Tuesday and production resumed on Wednesday last week. All stop-work orders were lifted as of Friday, February 17th and work safety BC has issued initial reports related to the stop work orders including details of the parts per million (PPM) of ammonia in different areas of the building at different times of when the plant was closed. The inspector will now be making a determination of causation. All we can say at this time is that we have general knowledge about how the leak occurred, that it involved a forklift hitting an ammonia line, but we have not reached any other conclusions about causation. Once we review the inspector's

conclusions, we'll have more to report and we'll be in a better position to take next steps on the issue of pay during the closure.

m / s / c to adopt the President's report as read.

6. **Secretary-Treasurer's Report**

- Superstore Shift Place Market/Shift Bars Place Program has been active for 10 weeks. Loblaw has been tracking the adoption and usage rate during November, December and the first half of January. 10,300 members offered to swap shifts and 4,000 of them were actually swapped for a 40% completion rate. During this time period, 1,100 members picked up a shift on Shift Marketplace. Given the usage rates, members are utilizing the system to their advantage and to a greater degree than first thought. One issue that has been reported is that some managers have been failing to check the system for swaps and are surprised when a different employee shows up for the shift. If a manager fails to approve or deny the swap, then the system is set up to auto approve it.
- The Ontario experience with Shift Marketplace was that most of the interest from members involved dropping shifts. The Vancouver experience has been somewhat more focused on swapping shifts, at least initially. If more detailed statistics were available, it would in all probabilities show that more shifts are being picked up in stores where there's an ample number of staff and fewer in stores with minimal staffing due to the fact that members are already getting as many or more hours than they actually want. With RTOs being done online now, Loblaws is able to track the numbers and during this time period, 18,500 requests were placed for specific RDOs, requested days off and 13,700 were granted. This would be an approval rate of 74%.
- We had a recent incident in the Abbotsford Superstore where a long-term steward was subjected to both verbal and physical abuse at the hand of an angry customer. The store's response to the issue was subpar to be blunt and they tried to minimize it at store level. The store took the position that if there was no time loss injury, they didn't have to file a report. We strongly disagree with that position and took the issue up with the employer. We also sought input from one of the staff lawyers at Koskie Glavin Gordon who previously had worked for WorkSafe BC and was very familiar with the requirements. The lawyer suggested eight possible steps to take to address the issue and we are working through them as needed to make certain that incidents like this are properly handled at both store level and by the corporation itself. At this point, early in our investigation, it is unclear if the flaws were at store level rather than the corporate Health and safety department. The employer's deadline to report this incident to WorkSafe is rapidly approaching. If the incident isn't properly reported that will result in a complaint to Work Safe. There may be several other complaints that are filed as we work our way through this investigation of the employer's practices and policies.
- Members are encouraged to report all incidents to the employer as soon as possible and also report to the in-unit Health and Safety Committee for proper consideration and investigation. Each workplace must have its own health and safety committee which meets on a monthly basis, to conduct a workplace safety inspection, review any hazards found or reported, and come up with an action plan to deal with these hazards. These committees also review any reported injuries or close calls during the preceding month. The minutes of these meetings will be posted in a visible area for all to read. If members find that there are any concerns with the effectiveness of the safety committee, they're encouraged to call your union representative so that we can investigate the matter.

m / s / c to adopt the Secretary-Treasurer's report as read.

7. **Bargaining Report**

- We have told Five Corners that we are at an impasse and will proceed with final offer selection. The company was not responding to request to book dates to discuss the outstanding proposals. They have since hired a lawyer to assist them. We have given them several new dates to start the process and a tentative date has been set as of March 8th for the next meeting.
- Centennial Foods members ratified their proposed contract on December 15th, 2022. After many months of challenging bargaining, the committee negotiated many changes throughout the CBA. Members will receive a 13.5% increase in total by December of 2024. Along with three separate lump sum payments. A new health spending account was created for members to determine for themselves which benefits they would like to use the money on. Both premiums were increased, and several new premiums were also added. In addition to the 6 paid sick days each year, all members will receive a personal time off day with pay for any reason at all.
- Two separate No Frills Surrey locations bargained and ratified a new collective agreement in January and February. Part-time employees will now have access to benefits. The pay scales were revised to ensure that any future increases to minimum wage will result in increases to all progression steps on the scales with guaranteed increases to the top rates for the life of the agreements.
- City Market West Vancouver members will see immediate increases to all scales with future protections built in. Lump sum payments if ratified on March 1, 2023. Voting will take place at 10:00 AM or 6:00 PM at the West Vancouver Senior Centre. Benefits for part-time employees have the qualifying period reduced by two years for each of the benefit categories.
- Similar to City market's, the benefit qualifying period was reduced by two years for all Your Independent Grocers Whistler part-time employees. The last few years has been challenged for the employer to attract new hires, so they started paying above some of the scales. All staff will receive increases and continue to receive an increase each year for the life of the agreement even if they are overscale. Voting will take place February the 25th at the Whistler Library.
- We have contacted Stong's to begin negotiations with the Dunbar location. Forms requesting proposals will be in your store soon. You may also contact your Union Representative now with proposals.

8. **Engagement & Education Report**

- We have a large group of 25 members available to participate in our Introduction to Stewardship course, which is scheduled for March 21-23. This 3-day course includes a day of Conflict Resolution education, as it is an important skill in the type of work we all do as advocates.
- This is one of the largest groups we have had in the past; it's great to see more members being curious about the job of a steward. Attending this course does not automatically make members Stewards but it sure gives them the knowledge and skills needed to be informed union members and this strengthens our union. This course is booked on demand so if you are interested in learning about the responsibilities of a steward, contact your union representative as soon as possible.
- We have also booked a brand new 2-day Indigenous Activism course for the first week of May. Our shop stewards can expect an invitation to this in-person course early next month. The course will be facilitated by Eric Flett, our UFCW Canada Resident Elder, from the Ojibway - Ebb and Flow First Nation in Manitoba.
- Stewards can also expect an invitation to Health and Safety courses in the next few weeks. Courses that will focus on Effective Health and Safety Committees in the Workplace, Incident Investigations, Violence Prevention and Mental Health.
- At the request of one of our union representatives, we have booked a Retirement Workshop for warehouse members who are considering retirement in the near future. It will be a short 2-hour session and it's booked for March 1.

- Lastly, the UFCW Charity Foundation International Scholarship program is now open and will be available until May 13. At least 8 scholarships worth up to \$8,000 will be awarded to eligible members or dependents over a four-year period. Dependents must be unmarried and under 20 years of age. UFCW Canada also offers 3 x \$1,000 equity grants. Applications are now available until September 30th. This grant aims to support newcomers programs, human rights initiatives and community action projects that are led by our UFCW members.

9. **New Business**

- No new business.

Q&A PERIOD - 2 questions in the queue answered.

10. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:33 pm.

Member Draw - was conducted electronically. 3 winners were picked; each receiving a \$100 gift card.