

**MINUTES OF THE 13<sup>TH</sup> BIENNIAL CONVENTION OF THE GRAIN AND GENERAL SERVICES UNION (ILWU • CANADA) POLICY CONVENTION held at the Bella Vista Hotel, Humboldt, SK - March 22-24, 2018**

Local 1 – Viterra Ops/Maintenance

Dave Boulding, Grenfell  
Jim Brown, Balgonie  
Trisha Clarke, Melfort  
Matthew Denomie, Saskatoon  
Wyatt DuPin, Melfort  
Mel Horner, Ogema  
Scott Jordison, Tisdale  
Brian Lark, Semans  
Brian Parrott, Yorkton  
Wes Pearce, Govan  
Brian Sansom, Saskatoon  
Tom Sargeant, Gull Lake

Local 4 Grain Millers

Alex MacKay, Yorkton

Local 5 – Western Producer

Michelle Houlden, Saskatoon  
Sharlene Tetrault, Saskatoon

Local 6 – Wild West Steelhead

Riley Breen, Lucky Lake  
Keaton Cooper, Saskatoon

Local 8 – Advance Engineered Products

Ron Gerlock, Regina  
Douglas Kampman, Regina  
Jason Wirth, Regina

Local 7 – Heartland Livestock

Larry Worobetz, Prince Albert

Local 9 – Trouw Nutrition

Kevin Clarke, Chilliwack  
Kelvin Saretzky, Chilliwack

Local 14 – Richardson

Tim Kachmarski, Kindersley  
Leon Martineau, Maple Creek  
Dennis Piasta, Kindersley  
Dylan Pilon, Assiniboia  
Mark Zacharias, Carrot River

GSU Staff

Hugh Wagner, General Secretary  
Lynn Woods-Nordin, Assistant General Secretary  
Dale Markling, Staff Representative  
Steve Torgerson, Staff Representative  
Donna Driediger, Staff Representative

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*These minutes reflect the disposition of the Convention. It should be noted that each agenda item and matters which arose, were thoroughly discussed and often vigorously debated. In the interest of brevity, however, in most instances the final result is the only aspect recorded.*

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## MARCH 22, 2018

The convention commenced with lunch at 12:00 noon.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

General Secretary Hugh Wagner called the convention to order at 1:00 p.m. He introduced himself and welcomed everyone to convention.

Convention attendees were advised that guest rooms would be available at 2:30 p.m., and those who hadn't already done so were encouraged to select a GSU t-shirt of their choice.

Introductions continued as Wagner introduced the head table. He also welcomed and introduced guests from the International Longshore and Warehouse Union - Canada, Grain Workers Union, and the Retail, Wholesale Union and other invited guests. GSU delegates were also invited to stand, introduce themselves and the Locals/members they represented.

The content of the convention kits was reviewed.

The agenda was introduced by Wagner, who recommended it be used as a general guideline with additional items being added as topics arose and were discussed.

MOVED by Leon Martineau, seconded by Wes Pearce that the agenda be adopted with the ability to add. Carried.

Delegates reviewed GSU's anti-harassment policy and Wagner stated the GSU convention must be a harassment-free zone. He said GSU set good standards, and while we can disagree we must always be respectful and never call anyone's dignity and self-respect into question. Wagner encouraged everyone to treat fellow convention attendees with respect on a non-discriminatory basis. GSU staff members Steve Torgerson and Lynn Woods-Nordin were introduced as the appointed anti-harassment officers for convention.

Wagner invited GSU president Jim Brown to bring greetings and opening remarks to convention, which he did.

Wagner advised that 2018 marked his 43rd year with GSU, adding it had been quite a journey and he hoped it would continue for the next two years. He announced he would be letting his name stand for one more term in office, but would not be running beyond that. It was his intention to continue to advance the cause of union and members in particular and to do groundwork to turn union leadership over to a new generation to lead GSU into the future. GSU, Wagner said, stands on the shoulders of those who preceded us – the pioneers who formed the union in 1936 and stuck with it. Their ideas and advocacy for worker rights were often opposed, oppressed and put down; yet they persevered and we stand here because of their struggle. GSU will continue to work to make sure young workers have at least as good – or better – a standard of living as those before them, and we have to continue to move forward.

Wagner introduced Mark Crawford from the Unemployed Workers' Centre as he joined convention.

## **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS CONVENTION**

GSU vice president Michelle Houlden read the minutes of the 2016 convention. There was no business arising from the minutes.

MOVED by Brian Sansom, seconded by Wes Pearce that the minutes be adopted as read. Carried.

Wagner noted that meals throughout convention would be served in the attached dining area, and Local caucus meetings would be held across the hall in the Charleston and Richmond rooms.

### **AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The 2017 Audited financial statements of the union as at Dec. 31, 2017 were presented and reviewed in detail by Hugh Wagner. Delegates were encouraged to ask questions as they arose throughout his presentation.

MOVED by Ron Gerlock, seconded by Dave Boulding that the 2017 Audited Financial Statements of Grain and General Services Union be adopted as presented.

Carried.

### **OPERATING BUDGET**

The proposed 2018 operating budget was introduced by Wagner. Delegates were advised that that union dues revenues would decline somewhat while meeting and convention expenses would rise since 2018 is a convention year for GSU and delegate meetings expenses would rise by a significant amount as Locals 1 (Viterro) and 14 (Richardson) prepared for bargaining. The proposed budget also predicted double the previous year's legal expenses as the union was involved in an appeal to Social Security Tribunal of Canada with an appeal of an EI claim claw-back of a member's benefits under SUB program. Wagner also noted a number of employers are becoming more aggressive in attempting to thwart employees from receiving their EI top-up and a number of other grievances were heading to arbitration. As most everyone was aware, arbitrations are expensive as GSU hires legal counsel and the services of arbitrators are not cheap.

MOVED Dennis Piasta, seconded Brian Lark that the operating budget be accepted as presented.

Carried.

### **SPEAKER – MARK CRAWFORD**

Wagner welcomed Mark Crawford of the Unemployed Workers' Help Centre to join him at the podium and explained how the services of Crawford and the Help Centre greatly assisted workers with EI claims. Wagner invited Crawford to bring greetings and address convention delegates.

Crawford described the Help Centre as a non-profit organization that was started by unions, was financed by unions, and was still directed by unions and members. In its 23 years, the organization had successfully appealed 1600 claims amounting to nearly \$17 million recovered for workers.

Wagner thank Crawford for his hard work and for travelling to address GSU convention delegates. He advised that a \$50 donation would be made on behalf of Crawford to the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour (SFL) Summer Camp.

Wagner advised that guest rooms were ready for check-in and wireless service at the hotel was complimentary.

*Lifestyle break ~ 3:45 p.m.*

Wagner introduced Darla Deguire from the Canadian Labour Congress and Garry Burkart from Retail, Wholesale, Department Store Union – Sask. Joint Board as they joined convention.

#### **GREETINGS – ROB ASHTON**

International Longshore and Warehouse Union president Rob Ashton was invited to bring greetings and address convention.

Wagner thanked Ashton for his presentation, and advised that a \$50 donation to SFL Summer Camp would be made in Ashton's name.

#### **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE JOINT EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

General secretary Wagner, president Brown, and vice president Brett North presented the draft Joint Executive Council Annual Report as delegates followed along with the copies of the report provided in their convention kits.

Wagner asked the convention to move a motion to adopt, subject to a final vote later in convention.

MOVED Matt Denomie, seconded Brian Lark that we adopt the draft JEC report for presentation to GSU members.

## REVIEW OF CONVENTION MATERIALS

Delegates reviewed other items in the convention kit and workbook, including but not limited to:

- Strike policy  
The policy has not changed. Wagner urged delegates to review it, become familiar with it and reflect upon it as it would not be read aloud at convention.
- History of GSU Defense Fund  
This review of the Defense Fund states how the fund originated, policies adopted for the fund, steps that built the fund, and the fund as it stands today. There have been no changes to policy since 2016. Delegates were encouraged to study and reflect upon this information.
- Scholarships and Bursaries  
GSU administers seven scholarships/bursaries. Five are for members/dependents of GSU and two external bursaries are awarded through the First Nations University of Canada and St. Thomas More College (University of Saskatchewan). Qualifications and decision processes for same were reviewed. GSU's scholarship committee would appreciate direction regarding an essay topic for 2018. Discussion on possible subjects ensued, and Wagner encouraged delegates to continue discussing possible topics and report same to the executive committee.

## CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Convention delegates turned their attention to the copies of GSU constitutional amendments in their kits. Wagner noted amendments were primarily housekeeping motions to reflect name changes.

MOVED by Leon Martineau, seconded by Dave Boulding that sub-section 8.12 of section 8 of GSU's Constitution be amended by changing the name of the employer to Lakeland Co-operative Association. Carried.

MOVED by Scott Jordison, seconded by Kelly Saretzky that sub-section 8.13 of section 8 of GSU's Constitution be amended by changing the name of the employer to Discovery Co-operative Ltd. Carried.

MOVED by Dylan Pilon, seconded by Tom Sargeant that sub-section 8.16 of section 8 of GSU's Constitution be deleted to reflect the fact the Richardson International purchased CHS Canada,

and that the GSU members formerly employed by CHS Canada be transferred to Local 14 and that Appendix C – Sub-Local Structure of Local 14 be amended by substituting Edenwold for Alameda in Sub-Local 14.4. Carried.

MOVED by Dennis Piasta, seconded by Michelle Houlden that the GSU Constitution 8.8/Local 9 be amended to substitute Trouw Nutrition in place of Viterra/HiPro.

Carried.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The convention adjourned ahead of schedule at 4:10 p.m. and delegates from Local 1 (Viterra), Local 14 (Richardson), and Local 15 (CPS) attended their local-specific caucus meetings.

## **RESUMPTION**

The convention reconvened at 7:00 p.m.

## **GUEST SPEAKER – DARLA DEGUIRE**

Wagner introduced Darla Deguire from the Canadian Labour Congress and welcomed her to begin her presentation on Pharmacare.

Wagner thanked Deguire for her informative presentation and advised that a \$50 donation would be made to the SFL Summer Camp in her name.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Announcements regarding the evening social, the following day's breakfast arrangements, and a 9:00 a.m. start time were made before convention adjourned for the evening.

## **MARCH 23, 2018**

## **RESUMPTION**

Convention reconvened at 9:00 a.m.

**GREETINGS – SHAWN LAKUSTA**

Hugh Wagner introduced Retail Wholesale Union B.C. provincial representative Shawn Lakusta and invited him to bring greetings to convention.

Wagner thanked Lakusta for his greetings and said a \$50 donation to the SFL Summer Camp would be made on his behalf.

**JEC REPORT**

Convention delegates conducted their final review of the proposed Joint Executive Council Report and the recommended constitutional amendments. Wagner advised there were a number of resolutions referenced in the report which needed to be dealt with before the report was adopted.

**RESOLUTIONS**

MOVED by Dave Boulding, seconded by Brian Parrott, that the general secretary's report on GSU operations, finances, and the GSU's 2017 Audited Financial Statements be approved.

Carried.

MOVED by Scott Jordison, seconded by Dennis Piasta that GSU's 2017 audited financial statements be approved and included in the 2018 annual report to members subject to moving charges from Defense Fund to the Operations account, and a correction changing a reporting date from 2016 to 2017.

Carried.

MOVED by Mel Horner, seconded by Keaton Cooper that the 2018 GSU operating budget estimate presented by the general secretary be approved.

Carried.

MOVED by Tom Sergeant, seconded by Alex MacKay that the Executive Committee be authorized to request that the Board of Directors of the GSU Defense Fund transfer up to \$100,000 to GSU operations to cover legal expenses incurred in 2018.

Carried.

**GUEST SPEAKER – RONNI NORDAL**

Wagner introduced GSU legal counsel Ronni Nordal from Nordal LeBlanc Law Firm. Nordal gave a presentation on mental health, addiction, and the power of being part of a smaller union where elected and paid staff know members' names.

Wagner thanked Ronni for her presentation and advised that a \$50 donation would be made in her name to the SFL Summer Camp.

### **GUEST SPEAKER – ROB HUNDEBY**

GSU staff rep Dale Markling came forward to introduce invited guest speaker Rob Hundebly who made a presentation regarding his experiences with Truth and Reconciliation.

Wagner thanked Hundebly for his presentation and advised a \$50 donation to SFL Summer Camp, and noted that among other things, the camp educated campers about problems with racism.

*Lifestyle break ~ 10:40 a.m.*

### **RESOLUTIONS**

MOVED by Tom Sergeant, seconded by Alex MacKay that GSU oppose the introduction of a carbon tax by the federal government. Carried.

MOVED by Trisha Clarke, seconded by Brian Lark that GSU support the fight for \$15 campaign to raise the minimum wage in Saskatchewan. Carried.

After the motion passed, Houlden suggested that because we thought the Fight For \$15 campaign was important, GSU needed to go beyond that to ensure those we hire on our own are paid at least a minimum of \$15 per hour.

MOVED by Tom Sergeant, seconded by Tim Kachmarski that GSU encourage all Locals to bargain paid sick leave into their collective agreements. Carried.

MOVED by Sharlene Tetrault, seconded by Matt Denomie that GSU lobby for employer-paid sick leave and paid compassionate leave as a universal labour standard in the Canada Labour Code and the Saskatchewan Employment Act. Carried.

MOVED by Brian Samson, Dylan Pilon that GSU bargain to establish the ability of employees to use paid sick leave to attend to family members' illnesses, injuries and/or medical treatments. Carried.

MOVED by Tom Sergeant, seconded by Wes Pearce that GSU lobby and bargain for stat holiday pay to be paid at the equivalent of employees' work shifts. Carried.

## ADJOURNMENT

The convention adjourned for a lunch break from 11:50 a.m. until 1:15 p.m.

## RESUMPTION

Wagner introduced Lawrence Maier as he joined convention.

## GUEST SPEAKER – LARRY HUBICH

Wagner introduction SFL president Larry Hubich and invited him to address convention delegates.

Hubich touched on a number of topics, including the SFL/CLC Spring School, the SFL Summer Camp, the upcoming 2018 SFL convention, Treaty 6 territory, the Saskatchewan budget and its cuts, and he encouraged delegates to visit [www.saskcrowns.ca](http://www.saskcrowns.ca) to sign the petition opposing the sale of Crown corporations.

Following Hubich's presentation, Houlden suggested a motion that one day's per diem be donated from this convention from every person and split evenly between the SFL Summer Camp and Saskatoon & District Labour Council Summer Snack program.

Houlden said the SDLC program fed children who relied on school programs for lunches and meals during the school year, and these children had nowhere else to turn during the summer when the programs are off. She also spoke about the difference the SFL Summer Camp made in her daughters' lives and the lives of other kids, and she urged delegates to consider funding the SFL Summer Camp.

MOVED Michelle Houlden, seconded by Jim brown that one per diem per GSU delegate be donated to be split equally between the SFL Summer Camp and the SDLC summer snack program. Carried.

Wagner thanked Hubich for his presentation and said a \$50 donation would be made to the SFL Summer Camp in his name.

## RESOLUTIONS

Wagner raised another resolution to amend the Constitution. Specifically, the Constitution – section 8.6, page 9 should be amended to add Northern Livestock Sales.

MOVED by Leon Martineau, seconded by Brian Lark that GSU's constitution be amended to add Northern Livestock Sales to Section 8.6. Carried.

MOVED by Tom Sargeant, seconded by Dave Boulding that GSU lobby and bargain for paid compassionate leave to become a part of the Canada Labour Code and the Saskatchewan Employment Act. Carried.

MOVED by Michelle Houlden, seconded by Dennis Piasta that GSU establish a family crisis benefit of \$1,500 that would be available to signed members of the union. Further, this benefit would be paid out of the GSU Defense Fund, subject to review and further examination by the Joint Executive Council. Carried.

### **GREETINGS – GARRY BURKART**

Wagner welcomed Garry Burkart from Retail Wholesale Department Store Union to bring greetings to convention.

Burkart's presentation focused on two-tier collective agreements and how they created two classes of employees and resentment toward the union. There was a general consensus that it was important to bargain against such agreements and that it was important to shop union.

Wagner thanked Burkart for his presentation, said \$50 would be donated to the SFL Summer Camp in his name.

*Lifestyle Break ~ 2:45 p.m.*

### **GREETINGS – GERRY GAULT**

Wagner welcomed Gerry Gault, president of the Grain Workers Union Local 333 of ILWU Canada, to bring greetings to convention.

As with previous speakers, Wagner indicated a \$50 donation would be made on Gault's behalf to the SFL Summer Camp.

### **GETTING-TO-KNOW-YOU EXERCISE**

Staff representative Steve Torgerson lead convention delegates through an exercise which encouraged interaction on the convention floor and demonstrated the value of cheering on others and working together to make sure others do better.

At the end of the exercise, Torgerson congratulated Larry Worobetz, who was the ultimate rock/paper/scissors champion.

## RESOLUTIONS

MOVED by Wes Pearce, seconded by Dylan Pilon that the additional membership dues being paid into the GSU Defense Fund be reduced to \$5.00 per member per month effective July 1, 2018. Defeated unanimously.

Convention considered who should have the authority to determine what donations were made to the variety of appeals received at the GSU office. After Wagner's review of a sample and explanation of a number of donation requests that had been made and received over the past year, it was agreed that donations will continue to be at the discretion of GSU's executive committee.

## CONVENTION DATES

Convention discussed the best dates for holding GSU convention.

MOVED by Dave Boulding, seconded by Matt Denomie that scheduling of GSU conventions be done as required while avoiding the spring and autumn rush.

Carried.

## NOMINATIONS FOR OFFICE

MOVED by Dennis Piasta, seconded by Dylan Pilon that staff representatives Dale Markling and Steve Torgerson be appointed as the balloting committee.

Carried.

## PRESIDENT

Dave Boulding nominated Jim Brown.

MOVED by Leon Martineau, seconded by Matt Denomie that nominations cease.

Carried.

Brown agreed to let his name stand and was declared elected by acclamation.

VICE PRESIDENT

Mel Horner nominated Brett North.

Sharlene Tetrault nominated Michelle Houlden.

MOVED by Dave Boulding, seconded by Brian Samson that nominations cease.

Carried.

North and Houlden agreed to let their names stand and were declared elected by acclamation.

GENERAL SECRETARY

Tom Sargeant nominated Hugh Wagner.

MOVED by Tim Kachmarski, seconded by Alex MacKay that nominations cease.

Wagner agreed to let his name stand and was declared elected by acclamation.

DEFENSE FUND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Wagner advised that GSU members didn't need to be a delegate to convention to be nominated or elected to the GSU Defense Fund Board of Directors. Wagner then described the position and what was required of members.

Leon Martineau nominated the five incumbents.

MOVED by Tom Sargeant and Keaton Cooper and Alex MacKay that nominations cease.

Carried.

Ron Gerlock, Wilfred Harris, Brian Lark, Dennis Piasta, and Sharlene Tetrault were declared elected by acclamation.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The convention adjourned for the day at 4:30 p.m.

**March 24**

**RESUMPTION**

The convention reconvened at 9:10 a.m. with two items of business to complete.

MOVED by Keaton Cooper, seconded by Tim Kachmarski that the Draft 2018 Report of the Joint Executive Council be approved, as amended, for distribution to members.

Carried.

**Swearing-in of Elected Officers**

The newly elected officers of the union took the oath of office and were sworn in.

**Other business**

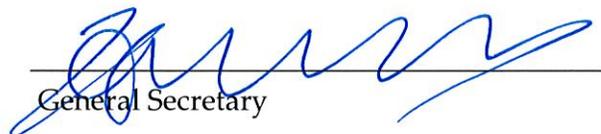
The lottery ticket purchased was a \$20 winner. It was agreed that the money be donated to the SFL Summer Camp.

Draws were made for the door prizes.

**Adjournment**

The convention adjourned at 9:25 a.m.

  
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President

  
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General Secretary