

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF GRAIN AND GENERAL SERVICES UNION (ILWU CANADA) held In Person at GSU's Regina Office on March 8, 2024

Participants:

President - Jim Brown
Vice President – Anastassia Oborotova
General Secretary – Steve Torgerson

Absence with Regrets:

Vice President – Sheila Tran

These minutes reflect the disposition of the meeting. 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.

Call to Order

General Secretary Steve Torgerson called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

The purpose of the meeting was to prepare for the Joint Executive Council (JEC) meeting on March 21, 2024.

The agenda was reviewed and adopted (attached).

GSU Financial Picture

Torgerson presented the draft audited financial statements and the draft 2024 budget, noting that the final meeting with the auditor is scheduled to take place the following week and no major changes to these documents were expected.

The new budget format and changes from previous budget reports were noted.

Torgerson stated the union regularly goes through a cycle of higher and lower expenses and GSU's financial picture is good. To help smooth the ups and downs, Torgerson's proposed budget includes new special funds. These special funds will receive budgeted money annually to save for planned or expected expenses.

Torgerson reported on the extensive legal fees that GSU incurred in 2023 as a result of ongoing bargaining at Local 1 & 2 (Viterra) and Local 5 (Western Producer). As a result of this unexpected expense, the Executive Committee moved the following motion.

MOVED by James Brown, seconded by Anastassia Oborotova that the GSU Executive Committee requests that the GSU Defense Fund cover the legal expenses that GSU incurred in 2023 related to collective bargaining. Specifically, this request includes \$9,319.44 incurred by Local 1 and 2 (Viterra) and \$64,251.32 incurred by Local 5 (Western Producer). These expenses were directly related to bargaining for the Locals and to defending the Locals from Unfair Labour Practices, certification applications to the Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board and other grievances and files that arose from bargaining issues and employer bargaining tactics.

Carried.

Organizing

Torgerson's draft budget allotted a small amount of funds to launch GSU's long-term push into increased and consistent organizing efforts. He noted that while this amount is not enough to mount a serious organizing campaign or committee, it is what is available in the 2024 budget.

The discussion turned to what GSU's focus should be and how we can build our organizing capacity. The framework of a plan will be presented at the JEC meeting in March.

GSU Business

The committee discussed the new-officer training that had taken place on March 6, 2024, and they considered what the plan for future education will be. It was agreed that a Steward 2 course will be developed over the summer months with a target of holding it this Fall.

The committee discussed the GSU scholarships and chose a scholarship essay question for 2024.

The committee reviewed GSU draft policies on Political Action, Special Funds and Collective Bargaining. These draft policies will be presented at the JEC meeting for review and adoption. The committee had a thorough discussion about the upcoming GSU biennial policy convention in 2025. Upon reflecting on the previous convention, it was decided to continue focusing on

education, promoting familiarity and comradery among convention delegates, providing solid information for delegates to make decisions with, and continuing to try new things. The ideas and plans discussed for the 2025 convention were noted and will be presented to the JEC meeting in March.

Bargaining Updates

Torgerson provided bargaining updates on the following Locals:

- Local 1 & 2 (Viterra)
- Local 5 (Western Producer)
- Local 6 (Wild West Steelhead)
- Local 9 (Trouw Nutrition)
- Local 19 (Prairie Co-op)
- Local 8 (Advance) – agreement expires April 27, 2024
- Local 15 (Nutrien) – agreement expires Dec. 31, 2024.

GSU Locals

Torgerson reported that he has turned over the majority of his servicing assignments to GSU staff representatives, with the exception of Local 8 (Advance) that is just getting into negotiations. Local 8's affiliation agreement with GSU was discussed. Follow-up will take place once Local 8 negotiations are complete, when GSU representatives will arrange to meet with Local 8 executive members and review the affiliation agreement.

Torgerson reported on a new strategy for providing clear and consistent support and direction for Local 1 (Viterra), Local 14 (Richardson) and Local 15 (Nutrien). This will see each of these three, geographically diverse Locals assigned a GSU staff representative to be their primary point of contact and resource. Currently all three staff representatives have their assignments for various Sub-Locals within these three Locals, but the overall Local lacks some consistency. This assignment will see the staff representative work with each Local's Board of Delegates as they do the work needed in their Local.

To this end, Brian Lark will work with the Local 1 board, Donna Driediger will work with the Local 14 board, and Mason Van Luven will work with the Local 15 board.

Upcoming Events

Upcoming 2024 events were noted:

- March 21 – GSU’s Joint Executive Council meeting
- April 23-26 – International Longshore & Warehouse Union Convention
- April 28-May 2 – Saskatchewan Federation of Labour (SFL) Spring School
- May 7-8 – Western Transportation Advisory Council (WESTAC) Spring Forum
- June 9-13 – SFL Prairie School
- August 10-16 – SFL Summer Camp
- Sept. 18-20 – SFL OH&S conference.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

President

General Secretary

Attachments:

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