

**DRAFT RECORD OF MEETING
B.C. REGIONAL COUNCIL CONFERENCE CALL
HELD WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2020 AT 6:30 PM**

In Attendance:

Jamey Mills, REVP-B.C. (Chair)
Susie Blyth, A/West Fraser Valley
James Brierley, Young Workers
Bert Farwell, North Vancouver Island
Nia Gillies, LGTBQ2+
Linda Harding, Health & Safety
Ron Hardy, Northeast B.C.
Ernest Hooker, South Vancouver Island
Jennifer Horsley, Metro Vancouver
Terri Lee, Metro Vancouver

Trish Martin, South Vancouver Island
Jenny MacLeod, Indigenous Peoples
Carolyn McGillivray, Southern Interior
Jeanne Olineck, Southern Interior
Antony Paller, East Fraser Valley
Shane Polak, MWD
Kelly Sidhu, Women's
Todd Smith Alternate, REVP-B.C.
Stephen Torng, Racially Visible

Regrets:

Johann Ackermann, West Fraser Valley
John Davies, DCL and SSE

Leanne Hughes, National Officers
Jill MacNeill, Northwest B.C.

Staff:

Patrick Bragg, Political Communications Officer

Kristin Schnider, EA to the REVP-B.C.

Jamey Mills called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Jamey called for any additions to the agenda, which had been circulated in advance via email. No additions were made.

Moved: Todd Smith; seconded: Trish Martin

Carried

REVP REPORT

a. AEC and NBoD Updates

Jamey advised that work has been ongoing with both the AEC and NBoD. Two weeks ago, the NBoD received a financial update that provided the PSAC is in good financial position. Almost all Phoenix-related monies owed in arrears have been collected. Current membership numbers are averaging around 200,000 members per month, which contrasts favourably with the 2019-2021 PSAC budget, which was built on the assumption of 178,000 members.

Jamey further reported that the review of the Union Development Program (UPD) has been completed. The review entailed a third-party review first followed by a review by the NBoD's Education Committee and past participants. The result of the review has created a new, revamped program to be called the Union Leadership Development Program, which will be offered in January 2021. A call for applications will be issued in fall.

The program will be geared to leaders on regional councils, Area Councils, Regional Committees, National Officers, and REVPs. Delivery will be based in the Regions except in cases where it will be delivered in French. In those cases it will be centralized. The format will include three one-week sessions, following the same format that was used for UDP prior to 2016. Jamey noted that the plans for

the Union Leadership Development Program are still tentative in light of the current situation with COVID-19.

The PSAC had been focusing heavily on the internal organizing campaign, which has identified some gaps in membership contact information. We have reached out to some larger locals to get updated, correct contact information for members. This information will be helpful as we head toward strike votes. Jamey noted that even amidst the situation with COVID-19, we are not prevented from reaching out to members to seek and confirm contact information.

In terms of conferences and conventions, Jamey advised that the CLC Convention has been postponed indefinitely. Prior to the postponement, one of the candidates did speak with the NBoD about their campaign. The other candidate was not available at that time.

The PSAC National Women's Conference has also been postponed until further notice. All delegates have been advised and travel/hotel arrangements have been cancelled by the PSAC.

The NBoD also discussed the call out for the National Equity Conferences. As a result of COVID-19 the call has been postponed. The NEC has been tentatively scheduled for the fall.

The NBoD also discussed resolution of record Gen-89, which addresses anti-harassment initiatives in the Regions. The resolution allows for Local, Regional Council, Area Council, Regional Committee training to actively fight anti-harassment. Funding is available nationally and can be accessed through the REVP Offices. A framework will be rolled out over the coming months and includes a \$25,000 budget.

COVID-19 Discussion

Jamey began the discussion, noting that the pandemic has affected all aspects of our lives. There have been a variety of workplace approaches to mitigate the spread of the virus. Most Employers are having employees work from home unless they are deemed critical.

The Government of Canada has also created a number of additional benefits to assist Canadians who are facing layoff. Relatedly, there has been a huge influx of EI applications in the last week, impacting members at Service Canada Offices (SCO).

Along with the other BCFED Officers, Jamey spoke with Premier yesterday. During that call, Jamey expressed the impact on SCO and workers who are already being offered over 20 hours of OT per week to deal with the additional load and backload.

Patrick then spoke on workers' rights in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Last Friday Treasury Board communications indicated that everyone other than essential workers should be teleworking. This statement caused considerable confusion because essential services differs significantly from 'critical staff'. The former is a bargaining term specific to contract language. As a result, the union and the Employer communicated back and forth of the weekend to clarify what critical work means. Clarification is posted at the national website: <http://psacunion.ca/telework-government-clarifies-critical-services>. However, this clarification is not permeating down to individual management. Further complicating the situation is the fact that there really isn't the existing infrastructure to allow all non-critical staff to telework. Chris Aylward has been in touch with Treasury Board every day to give and receive updates. Similarly, Component Presidents have been in touch with the relevant Ministers and Deputy Ministers regularly doing all we can to push this Government to take further actions to ensure the safety of members and providing teleworking arrangements as much as possible.

Those members that do have to report to work retain their right to refuse unsafe work. Further details on the right to refuse are available on the PSAC website at <http://psacunion.ca/covid-19-your-rights->

[work](#). If members believe it is unsafe for them at work, there are asked to communicate with their Local and/or Component because they have better access in terms of who to talk to at the worksite.

Jeanne Olineck advised that she spoke with the Executive Director of Citizen Services for the North and Southern Interior regarding member concerns in SCO. In addition to their call, Jeanne sent the Executive Director an email outlining easy, cost-effective ways mitigate the risk to members and clients in SCOs. The detail of the email has been forwarded to the Component and to the PSAC national office. A copy of that email is attached to these minutes as reference for Regional Council members.

Jamey reminded the Council that if they haven't already occurred, UMCC meetings should be taking place to discuss protocols and procedures to address COVID-19.

VETERANS AFFAIRS CANADA

Shane Polak advised that initially his members received some pushback from management regarding NCCN, the VAC call centre. Some workers were sent home to work via VPN. Existing VPN infrastructure can handle 900 users at a time. However, there are 3000 users in this group. Despite these challenges, all NCCN staff have been given cell phones and all have been directed to work from home. Management has been working to coordinate work on VPN, assigning specific times for workers to be on and ensuring VPN access for critical staff.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROCUREMENT CANADA

Linda Harding advised that all but seven staff with PSPC in BC have are working remotely. They are also facing challenges with VPN access: there are 10K lines available and 17K workers. Staff are granted 30 minutes of VPN access per day with those deemed critical receiving top priority for VPN access.

SERVICE CANADA OFFICES

Susie Blyth reported that she spoke with management earlier today regarding the SCOs in the East Lower Mainland. SCO offices in Chilliwack and on the North Shore have been closed due to understaffing and to address health and safety concerns of members. As of this morning there was also a decision to switch to critical services only, which means staff will be dealing with IE claims and pensions exclusively. However, there may be a few exceptions for some SIN and passport requests that will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

With schools now being closed until further notice, some questions have been raised in terms of members needing leave after spring break concludes to care for children. Jamey answered that TB posted online that members will be granted other leave with pay for the care of children at present. This arrangement will be reassessed on April 10. If a manager has not been approving leave in these cases, it is recommended that members go through the formal process to rectify the situation.

In terms of personal protective equipment (PPE), Susie advised that members at SCO have been issued gloves. However, they are not allowed to wear masks. Within the offices, they are taking steps to practice some social distancing: they have closed every other computer station, they have staggered the seating in the office.

One major health and safety concerns relates to the pre-screening of clients. There have been several instances of clients lying to members when asked the questions about recent travel, self-isolation requirements, etc. Members are hoping to have additional security stationed in the SCOs to help mitigate these situations.

SERVICE CANADA – INTEGRITY SERVICES

James Brierley advised that all staff with Integrity Services were sent home today. They are currently on paid leave (699) as they do not have access to VPN or equipment to carry out their responsibilities. Staff are to report into their supervisors daily to receive a status update for the branch.

There has been notable support from management within the Integrity Branch. However, this does not appear to be the case with other branches. James added that the Nanaimo SCO is also facing issues with pre-screening clients.

CANADA PENSION PLAN AND OAS STAFF

Trish Martin reported that the Employer is working on having the majority of staff working from home by March 27 pending the arrival of some equipment. The first staff to begin teleworking will be those deemed priority: those with underlying health conditions or those with dependent needs, etc. They are also waiting for the Minister to sign-off on staff calling clients and seeking verbal information in lieu of documentation. (Clients will be asked to retain documentation in case it is subsequently requested by CPP and OAS.)

Foundation Services staff will remain in the office, which equates to roughly 10% of the office staff. Their work is not conducive to teleworking as it relates to physical document management. Trish added that there has been one suspected case of COVID-19 in the office, which has caused some alarm.¹

COAST GUARD

Bert: advised that with Coast Guard a lot of members are working from home. However, any positions that primarily deal with paper have to go into the office, and social distancing measures have been put into place. A ships crew personnel have been given a questionnaire to determine if they are able to go on vessel or not: have they been out of the country recently, are they aware of any potential exposure to the virus, are they experiencing any symptoms related to COVID-19. If they answer no to all three questions, they are to report for work. Otherwise, they are to self-isolate at home for 14 days.

CFIA

Terri Lee reported that there have been challenges with CFIA in BC, but the rest of the country seems to be fairing better. The majority of staff across the country have been teleworking (since their work is conducive to doing so). This has not been the case in BC. Inspectors in BC were told they had to report to the office. However, as of noon today, the Employer did allow some staff in BC to go home. The rest are to report to the office on a two-week rotating schedule to limit the numbers in the worksite.

Another health and safety concern for inspectors has been with ship inspections. Technically all ship inspections are conducted outside of the country, which would require a self-quarantine period. In addition, there is a lack of protocols regarding personal protective equipment for inspectors. Terri added that they are having an emergency OHS committee meeting tomorrow to address these concerns.

CFIA member have also been told that if there were out of the country prior the government travel advisory announcements, they may receive 699 pay for their 14-day quarantine periods. However, if any staff choose to leave the country after travel advisories had been issued, they are required to take leave without pay for their quarantine periods.

¹ Following the call, Trish advised the REVP Office by email that while the Employer had committed to having 50% of staff working from home by March 27, they subsequently advised that the Employer only have 30 licenses to allow for teleworking. Therefore only 30 of the approximate 400 members will be able to work remotely. Additional licenses can take upwards of 2-4 weeks to receive.

SERVICE CANADA OFFICES

Jeanne Olineck advised that CEIU is working with Employer to ensure there is sufficient equipment available for members so they can work remotely. Member with underlying health conditions, those with children and those other risk factors are to receive the equipment first. The Employer has also advised members that if they choose to leave the country now they will be required to use LWP for their self-quarantine period.

Jeanne further advised that members are getting mixed messages from the Employer regarding manager pay for self-quarantine requirements. The Employer has said that unless members have received an actual COVID-19 diagnosis, they will not be able to receive manager pay and instead have to take leave without pay for the quarantine period. This is problematic as there are very few situations where a person experiencing COVID-19 symptoms would be tested. Health Offices (via 8-1-1 or otherwise) are simply asking those with symptoms to quarantine themselves for 14 days.

Jeanne added that another issue being raised relates to a member who may reside with family members who are returning from abroad. In these cases, does the member have to self-quarantine for the 14-days as well and what pay, if any, are they eligible for? To date, management has not been able to provide any answers on this. Jamey recommended that members raise these issues with their Local and Component who are well-versed in their particular work settings and would be in the best position to assist.

PUROLATOR

Jennifer Horsley advised that Purolator has advised staff that they are required to self-quarantine if they have been out of the country. In these cases, members are required to take leave without pay. In terms of social-distancing measures, the work isn't conducive to teleworking. Jennifer has been reaching out to the Employer daily to address member health and safety concerns but hasn't heard back yet.

There was a situation at Purolator worksite where a member arrived back from overseas and immediately reported for work. The member was sent home and the worksite sanitized. Jen noted that the member only reported for work because she didn't receive an answer from the Employer when she asked about her situation and quarantining requirements.

At the client-facing offices, clients are only being screened at larger centre. This inherently puts members' health and safety at risk. One step the Employer has taken is that clients may provide verbal consent for packages in lieu of signing. This means that members do not share their devices with public and limits some of their potential exposure.

b. Negotiations Updates – Strike Votes and Member Mobilization

Jamey advised that nearly all national units have reached an impasse except for FB. Strike votes have been called for all units except for CFIA and FB.

PIC reports have been received for the PA, TC, EB and the Common Issues Tables. The PIC for CRA is still underway. The PIC meeting for CFIA is scheduled to take place at the end of March. FB has not scheduled their PIC to date.

Strike votes were mandated by majority of the units, which means strike votes are to proceed with all four TB units as well as Parks Canada. Strike votes were already underway for UTE members at CRA. Half of those meetings have already been conducted with the balance of the schedule being suspended until March 30 when the situation with COVID-19 will be reevaluated. Turnout for the meetings that did proceed was high, and the questions and feedback received at those meetings was quite favourable in terms of a potential strike mandate.

On March 30, the PSAC will also reevaluate the feasibility for the strike vote and strike mobilization training schedules that had been set for TB, but not initiated yet as a result of COVID-19. In the interim, members are still encouraged to talk to one another about the strike vote and share information on what the strike vote is really about:

1. a fair wage package being presented to members, and one that's different than what's been offered to other bargaining units: seven percent over four years is a wage cut based on inflation trends during the period of the contract.
2. The federal government public sector has been working for over four years under the Phoenix payroll system and continued to make this country run despite not being paid correctly or on time. Our members deserve fair compensation in terms of a wage packages and Phoenix damages to date.

Jeanne asked how long the union has to conduct a strike vote once a PIC report is released. Jamey answered that once a PIC report is released the union must wait seven days before they take any strike action. In terms of specific examples, UTE members were scheduled to complete their strike vote prior to the release of the CRA PIC report. Once the strike mandate has been established by the union, UTE members will have to wait until seven days after the CRA PIC report is released before they can take any strike action. Jamey clarified that the strike vote is not tied to the release of the PIC report.

In terms of the strike mandate, once the strike mandate has been established by the union, we have 60 days to take strike action. If no action is taken, another strike vote would have to be conducted for the unit. Having the strike vote schedule suspended temporarily in light of COVID-19 does not affect the 60-day timeline. That timeline only comes into effect once the strike votes have concluded and the mandate has been established.

Jamey went on to report that the Treasury Board PSAC BC Regional Mobilization Coordinating Committee (RMCC) met at the Vancouver RO last Friday and Saturday in preparation for the TB strike votes, and they received some intense mobilization training. Their focus was on establishing and putting in place a strike structure in the event that TB workers go on strike.

Strike training has also been carried out for CFIA members in conjunction with the Agriculture Regional Summit earlier this month.

Carolyn asked if the TB RMCC organization chart could be sent out to the Regional Council. Jamey agreed.

ACTION ITEM:	REVP Office Staff to email Regional Council the current Treasury Board RMCC Organization chart
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POLITICAL ACTION REPORT

Chris Aylward was in BC March 5-8 and he attended mobilization activities in Vancouver and Victoria. Chris likely met with or spoke in front of 750 members during his time in the Region.

Non-bargaining related political action includes the work being carried out by BCFED Officers regarding COVID-19. Together, the Affiliates are calling on the provincial and federal governments to support workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as:

1. Legislated changes to the Employment Standards Act to secure immediate and retroactive job protection for workers who take sick leave, including workers that self-isolate, or are quarantined;

2. Provision of paid sick leave for all workers, including part-time and casual workers, temporary foreign workers and migrant workers, throughout the duration of isolation or quarantine;
3. Access to income supports/transfers for workers that fall outside of current definitions of employees, including independent contractors and the self-employed;
4. Immediate waiving of any requirement for doctor's notes for any worker; (done)
5. Enhancement of Employment Insurance (EI) benefits during the crisis to at least 75% of insurable income, reduction of barriers to access EI, and allocation of extra support staff at Service Canada to help smoothly administer the access to EI. (partially done, improvements to EI were announced today).

The BCFED has also reconstituted its Provincial Election Working Group with their first conference call taking earlier today. Affiliates were anticipating a fall election, but that is very much up in the air now because of COVID-19. That said, the plan going forward is to mirror the plan from the last provincial election. Training will be put on by the BCFED and the CLC with an eye toward giving members some canvass training and connecting activists with progressive political campaigns.

It's expected that some Affiliates will conduct their own member-to-member campaigns. There will also be a broader public campaign similar to the BCFED's "Better Can Be Here" campaign that was part of the 2017 election. Details are still be worked out in terms of where campaign funds will come from.

Patrick noted that there have been significant legislative changes regarding third party funding since the last provincial election. Business and unions are no longer able to inject money into political party campaigns. As a result, the BCFED is seeking a legal analysis into resources and what campaign advising they can conduct during the next provincial election.

The BCFED asked all Affiliates to provide their union density numbers for all provincial ridings, and the PSAC submitted theirs last week.

SUMMER OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Jamey advised that because the PSAC BC Regional Convention has been postponed indefinitely, all Regional Council Coordinators will remain in their respective elected positions until the Regional Convention is rescheduled or until another mechanism is established to conduct Regional Council elections. Regional Council members who were not planning to reoffer for their positions, may reach out to their alternates to help carry out their responsibilities.

With respect to summer outreach activities, planning will still continue. Jamey noted that he still anticipates that the PSAC will be engaging with the public regarding our ongoing campaigns and issues (e.g. universal Pharmacare, universal childcare, Phoenix, etc.). However, before the PSAC or any of its regional structures register for public events clear information must be provided on cancellation and refund policies, especially those with significant costs.

Regional Council members are asked to advise the REVP Office of any summer outreach events they plan to participate with.

UPDATE ON 2020 PSAC BC REGIONAL TRIENNIAL CONVENTION AND APRIL 30 REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING

In keeping with recommendations from both local and national health authorities, the PSAC made the difficult decision to suspend activities that would require a large gathering of members. This included the PSAC BC Regional Triennial Convention, originally scheduled for May 1-3, 2020 in Vancouver. Since this decision was made, all Delegates, Observers, Guests and staff have been advised of the postponement of the Regional Convention. The REVP Office has also reached out to the venue and

other service providers to cancel all contracts associated with the Regional Convention (except for convention swag, which will still be produced and used for the Convention when it is rescheduled).

While the Regional Convention has been postponed, the work of the Resolutions Committees will still be carried out as scheduled to ensure that all preconvention work is concluded and ready to go when the Regional Convention is rescheduled. Jamey noted that at this point, it's likely the regional convention will not be rescheduled before the fall.

Jeanne Olineck asked if the Host Committee needed to continue with any tasks before the Regional Convention is postponed. Jamey answered the essentially the Host Committee is on hold: the swag has all been ordered and will be ready to go when the Regional Convention is rescheduled. Not much else can be done by the Committee in the interim.

Shane Polak asked if there would be an opportunity for Coordinators to submit supplemental or revised Convention reports in light of the postponement. Jamey answered that the REVP Office will allow for amended reports when the Regional Convention is rescheduled. For those Coordinator who have not yet submitted their Regional Convention reports, please do so by this Friday.

Because of the Regional Convention postponement, the next in-person Regional Council meeting that was scheduled for April 30 has been cancelled. In lieu of the April 30 meeting, Jamey suggested that the Regional Council scheduled a conference call in the next 30 days. The purpose of the meeting will be to provide an update on COVID-19 worksite impacts, strike votes, mobilization efforts and any further impacts on union activities resulting from COVID-19. All agreed.

ACTION ITEM: REVP Office to send out a Doodle poll for a Regional Council conference call to be held in approximately 30 days

DASH COMMITTEE UPDATES

a. Subsidy Requests

i. CLC Convention

The DASH Committee agreed to allow for up to five subsidies for the CLC Convention at maximum cost of \$2,500 in accordance with Regulation 7. This information was communicated to members and posted on the PSAC BC regional website. The REVP subsequently received two CLC Convention subsidies by the established deadline of March 13. Both applicants met the criteria to receive a \$500 subsidy and the Committee was recommending \$500 for each applicant.

Earlier this week, the CLC postponed the Convention as a result of COVID-19. However, the Committee Chair suggested that the Regional Council still move forward with the Committee's recommendations as the applicants did submit their applications in accordance with the Regulation and would still require the subsidies when the Convention is rescheduled.

Moved: Jennifer Horsley; seconded: Ron Hardy

Carolyn McGillivray asked if new subsidy applications could be received when the CLC Convention is rescheduled since the \$2,500 budget hadn't been exhausted. She further noted that the two applicants may not be able to attend the CLC Convention depending on when it is scheduled. Jamey advised that the DASH Committee will have to revisit CLC Convention subsidies and these questions when it is rescheduled.

After some further discussion the motion to approve the two CLC Convention subsidies was carried.

ii. Women Build BC Conference

The DASH Committee received one subsidy application for the Women Build BC Conference, which has now been postponed in light of COVID-19. As the applicant resides on Vancouver Island and the conference was slated to take place in Richmond, the Committee is recommending a \$375 in accordance with Regulation 7. Like the CLC Convention subsidies, the Committee recommends that the recommendation still be carried forward as the applicant submitted the request per the Regulation 7 guidelines, and when the conference is rescheduled the applicant would then have the funds available to her.

Moved: Jennifer Horsley; seconded: Ron Hardy

Carried

ACTION ITEM: REVP Office to advise applicants that they have been approved for their respective conference/convention subsidies in accordance with Regulation 7, to be issued as applicable when events are rescheduled

b. Donations Requests

i. Baron’s Organization International

The DASH Committee received a donation request from [Baron’s Organization International](#) (BOI) and is recommending a \$250 donation. However, the Committee was not able to come to a consensus on the recommendation. BOI is located in Victoria and is comprised of UNDE members, veterans and other family members who provide services for charitable organizations and other non-profits in the Victoria area. The request the REVP Office received from BOI was for some funding to support their efforts with a community anti-graffiti program they are participating with in Esquimalt. Funds will be used to purchase personal protective equipment for volunteers to carry out this work (and for use with future BOI activities that require PPE).

Moved: Jennifer Horsley; seconded: Ron Hardy

A committee member commented that she wasn’t sure an anti-graffiti program fit within the Regional Councils donations guidelines. Jenny Macleod then commented that too often graffiti can be racist in nature, and as Union we should support efforts to remove this harmful messaging in communities and fight against racism in all forms. Other Council members agreed. After some further discussion the motion to commit a \$250 donation to BOI was carried.

ii. Camp Jubilee

The DASH Committee received a donation request from [Camp Jubilee](#) and is recommending a \$699 donation to cover the cost of one camper’s attendance at camp. The cost of this donation has increased \$100 from previous years due the rising cost to conduct the camp.

Moved: Jen Horsley; seconded: Ron Hardy

Carried

iii. Greater Vancouver Food Bank

The DASH Committee received a donation request from the [Greater Vancouver Food Bank](#) and is recommending a \$400 donation.

Moved: Jennifer Horsley; seconded: Ron Hardy

Carried

iv. Union Gospel Mission

The DASH Committee received a donation request from the [Union Gospel Mission](#) and is recommending a \$200 donation.

Moved: Jennifer Horsley; seconded: Jeanne Olineck
Carried

Following the vote, Jamey advised that the UGM was forced to close their internal area as it seated more than 50 people. However, the UGM continues to provide take-away meal services for those in need on the downtown eastside.

ACTION ITEM:	REVP Office to issue the donations as approved by the Regional Council
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c. Sponsorship Request – Columbia Institute

The DASH Committee received a sponsorship request from the Columbia Institute for the High Ground 2020 Civic Governance Forum, which was scheduled to take place March 27-28, 2020 in Vancouver. Unfortunately, this event has been cancelled as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to its cancellation, the Committee had recommended a “volunteer sponsorship” at a cost of \$250. However, in light of the cancellation Jennifer suggested that the Regional Council hold the recommendation in abeyance until the forum is rescheduled. All agreed.

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

Linda Harding reminded the Council that members can address COVID-19 health and safety concerns at the workplace through UMCCs. That is the appropriate channel for raising concerns and seeking actions from the Employer.

Carolyn McGillivray extended her thanks to the REVP Office and Regional Offices staff for their efforts to support members with COVID-19 issues and the cancellation of several union events. Jamey advised that he would pass Carolyn’s comments on to the Regional Office staff.

Before moving to adjourning, Jamey thanked all Regional Council members for their continued activism for the membership, especially during these challenging times. Before the COVID-19 pandemic members were already dealing with mounting pressures vis-à-vis Phoenix pay issues, collective bargaining, etc. Now members are dealing with an unprecedented health situation. Jamey went on to say, that as elected offers we are all leaders and members will be looking to us for guidance and good information. As such, we need to ensure that any information we’re sharing or posting on social media channels is factual and from credible sources. Members trust us to have the correct information.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting.

Moved: Jamey Mills; seconded: Linda Harding
Carried

The meeting adjourned at 8:09 PM.

Minutes recorded by: Kristin Schnider

Minutes published: March 2020

Copy of Email from Jeanne Olineck to Management

From: jeanne.olineck@servicecanada.gc.ca <jeanne.olineck@servicecanada.gc.ca>

Sent: Tuesday, March 17, 2020 1:10:23 PM

Subject: Urgent- Front End CSOs at Citizen Services, Passports, and IRB not safe -some suggestions

Hi Pam

Thanks for our phone call meeting today. As per our conversation, I am sending you an email with a large number of things the employer can do to keep people safe, while still serving our vulnerable clients, who will be in desperate need.

Staff are very concerned on how we can keep ourselves safe if people have been exposed, have just got off a plane, or have the virus. People will lie. And people who are desperate will lie even more. It's been a week and nothing resolved. This is not okay. All we have are small posters on a wall and 3 screening questions.

People are losing their jobs and will be desperate. They can't get through on the lines. We are like the EI version of a hospital and need to be there to help. But we need to be safe, too, or we won't have people to help. Instead of us having to resort to Lab 1070, walking off the job, or staying home because we feel unsafe, the employer needs to be proactive to keep people safe.

Yesterday, <a member> asked for more cleaning and today was told "potentially" there is extra cleaning Kelowna passport and Service Canada. But not the small offices. So their lives don't matter? We want to help the clients, but not at risk of our lives.

Some more samples of what is happening now:

Today a guy came into Vernon office very sick. He'd been sent home by employer for suspicion of COVID. Guy said he has pneumonia (a sign of COVID) but felt better. He was hacking at desk. He got kicked out, but people at desk were exposed.

People come straight off the plane and lie.

People can't get through on phones. Yesterday the CSOs put people on phone at 9 am and were told they could not get through today. At 9 am!

People are becoming extremely aggressive in the offices, in particular in Abbotsford.

(I know you are not part of IRB, but I wanted to give an example of what is happening there - in their case, people are coming right off the planes. They even had a guy who snuck across the border come in.)

Staff in North Van are VERY scared. There have been 4 deaths in the area and the VIRUS is spreading fast. This office needs to be shut down ASAP.

There are a some really simple things the employer can do to keep CSO staff safe and we should not be waiting another week for the government to decide that we need to be safe!

We need to:

- Separate our bodies from the clients.
- Limit physical contact with clients.

Here's how:

- **STOP SIGN at the DOOR**

A **BIG** sign. Those little letter size posters are barely visible and pretty useless. It needs to be poster board size. Do them up by hand, if need be. Do not wait until they get translated. Do not wait until they go to the printers and get prettied up. It needs to be now. The sign needs to be very firm and VERY clear: Have it say:

DUE to the spread of COVID:

IF you have returned from travel overseas in the last 14 days

IF you have been exposed to anyone with COVID

IF you are experiencing any of the following:

-shortness of breath

-fever

-coughing

...You WILL be refused on-site service and denied entry to this office. No exceptions!

Please access our SERVICES on-line at ServiceCanada.gc.ca

Or call _____

(please note this line is very busy, please be patient).

- Stop self help! Post a sign: Due to the COVID virus, staff are not available to assist at self help.

(It was supposed to be self help to begin with and clients are supposed to be self-sufficient. Right now we are bending over in close quarters, touching the mouse, bending across clients, and are right amongst them - it's not safe.)

- No more calling on the phone for clients. They can't get through anyway and we don't want to use the same phone they are.

If people need help, do cross channel like we used to before-it connects to an agent to fix things like reports cards that won't go through. Right now we put them on the phone, but they can't get through anyway. And we end up using a shared phone (we pick up and dial it).

- Put people in a queue, then they go to a desk.
- One person only at welcome zone -greet clients across a desk, create some space. Put up a stanchion 2 metres from the welcome desk and screen from there.
- Clients are only served across a desk, putting some space between clients. Put up a stanchion in front of the desk, so staff are 2 metres from the clients
- Not put people with immune issues out front.

- We need ability to ask clients to leave if we feel threatened. This needs to be made clear to ALL staff. If it's not coming from National, then we need you, Pam, to send this message to all CSO and Passport staff.
- Limit the numbers in office. No more than 25, including staff. Clients can wait outside.
- Close down every 2nd computer, so clients are not beside each other.
- Move out chairs and space them apart. If they are nailed to the floor, have them covered with something that makes them unusual. Ensure that they are spaced out 2 metres apart from each other – keep the clients from spreading germs with each other.
- MUST have more and better cleaning, daily! Hire someone NOW. (Contracts are sub contracted and them subcontracted and cleaners are paid hourly and minimum wage- they don't care and have other jobs to do,so they want out as fast as they can. Most just flap a dust cloth and do a quick swirl in the toilet.
- Sanitizing wipes at all computer stations, asking clients to wipe down before and after use.
- **Security** - We need security guards. They need to be young and strong to muscle people out who won't go. (Not old commissionaires who are retired from other jobs and are fairly feeble). We need a way to lock unsafe people out. WE CANNOT WAIT until there is an issue and hire reactively. We MUST hire now. The union is getting reports of clients becoming very aggressive.
- Gloves for everyone. New gloves for every new client. They are passing documents and they could be sick.
- Back end staff will have to be okay with sharing a desk
- And why can't we put up plastic barriers like they have at the RCMP offices?

There is talk of filing Lab1070, walking out if there are unsafe conditions, or not coming to work. If we have to we will, but it won't help clients and they will be in super crisis. People are going to be desperate for money as jobs are lost. We need to be able to serve them, but keep ourselves. We don't want to waste energy on Lab 1070 and refusal to work or people not willing or able to come in. We need to serve clients, but we need to be safe. If we can't, then that's the next step.

If we let clients do their own self help, it's not hurting clients, but changing how we do it. It will limit physical and close contact with staff and keep us safe.

Further Measures that need to come from higher up:

- If the call centre can't deal with the calls, then put CSOs with Employment Insurance training on the lines, or even back into Employment Insurance processing – we need all the bodies. Give them computers or appgate to work from home.

- If Passports are being shut down, put those staff who are cross trained, or who can do simpler CSO work in the CSO offices.
- Refuse all service except Employment Insurance and Pensions – no one needs a passport right now or a Social Insurance Number- they can't get work anyway.

Pam,

If you have further questions on this, please reach out to <redacted>. She is the President of that local and many of these ideas came from her.

I am cc-ing the Presidents in our District, our CEIU National VP, Vanessa Miller, our CEIU Alternate VP Sargy Chima, and our PSAC Regional Executive VP Jamey Mills to keep them all in the loop.

JEANNE OLINECK