

East Fraser Valley Area Council Meeting Minutes

April 23, 2020

Teleconference

Meeting called to order 6:05pm.

Quorum was met.

In attendance

Sister Patty Ducharme PSAC Regional Rep

Brother Antony Paller Local 20044 (President)

Brother Melvin Dureen Local 20054 (Vice-President)

Sister Heidi Kay Local 20040 (Secretary)

Brother Alan Otrosina Local 20141

Sister Louise Shabiky Local 20017

Brother Dave Rude Local 20141

Brother Jamie Mills PSAC Regional Executive Vice President

Review of Agenda

Agenda amended to allow for the addition of Jamie Mills RVEP providing the EFVAC an overview on how the COVID Pandemic is affecting PSAC nationally.

Moved by Antony.

Seconded by Melvin

GUEST SPEAKER – Jamie Mills

-Jamie thanked all staff who were working throughout the crisis and volunteering to do other duties.

-Employees who are not currently working can review their pay information by phone by using the phone number that is posted to the Client Contact Center page on the Government of Canada web site.

-Meetings are taking place with government officials at a National level. Here in BC the BC Fed has also ensured that PSAC, as part of the Executive Officers, has had access to government. As a result, our member now have access to critical childcare space (up to the age of 5) despite working in the federal jurisdiction.

-We are still at a stand still with regards to bargaining except for a couple of groups still waiting for their Public Interest Commissions.

-Strike action for the border services group has been placed on hold due to the pandemic.

-UPCE has reached an agreement. It is expected to be ratified in the next month.

-PSAC regional office will be closed until June 30th, though they may open earlier if circumstances change. Staff are available by phone or email.

-The recent webinars held on staff safety with regards to COVID were successful.

-PSAC's "Still Here For Canada" campaign has entered its second phase. Send stories and pictures regarding what you are doing to support Canadians during this time to either the National/Regional PSAC website so they can be posted to highlight all ways that PSAC support Canadians.

COVID –Updates in the Workplace

Antony – Antony talked about some of the challenges the CFIA is facing in worksites run by third parties. Oftentimes, due to language barriers, employees do not seem to understand the concept of physical distancing and there is a great deal of concern that this is adding to the number of worksite outbreaks. Additionally, the Public Health Agency and the Federal Agency both giving information and instruction is causing some confusion in these worksites. Unions and worker representation would certainly assist in resolving a great many of these issues.

Dave- (Mission Medium Institution) has been off work on 699 for the past 4 weeks. He stated that there are supply chain issues and that the Institution is not managing to get their full food orders which is creating problems.

Alan (Mission Minimum Institution) stated that both Mission Medium and Minimum are struggling. In Mission Medium there are 65 confirmed Covid cases amongst the inmates and 11 employees. Fraser Health was supposed to swab the balance of the inmates and staff and that has yet to happen. He believes they have only been testing symptomatic people. At present there are 249 inmates in the institution. Management is trying to get people back at work despite the fact that there is an outbreak .

Louise (Pacific Institution)-has also been off work since the end of February. She stated that at her site management is, likewise trying to get people back into the workplace so that they have teams of people staffing the kitchen and food services. Employees are being told they have to wear PPE (and make it last for 5 shifts) while in the Institution.

Heidi (Kent Institution) reported that in contrast Kent was doing well. They have taken steps to ensure social distancing (painting lines so people will respect 6 feet) and wearing PPE while at work. As well they have a COVID Working group that meets bi weekly to address issues as they occur.

Melvin (Matsqui Institution) commented on the fact that he hoped the union was making note of the volume of jobs that during a pandemic are not essential and yet during the lead up to a strike are. He reported that there are problems with the physical lay out of the institution and ensuring people remain 6 feet away from each other.

Thanking Critical Workers For Their Contributions

-Antony asked how we best acknowledge the contributions of PSAC workers who continue to deliver important public services during this pandemic. A discussion took place and it was agreed that people would send in their ideas for banners that we will put up at entryways of institutions and other workplaces in the Fraser Valley to thank folks. Patty and Antony will compile a list and work with Patrick to make this happen.

Scheduling and location of next meeting

-Next meeting to be via Skype or teleconference on May 28th, 2020 at 6:00.

Adjournment moved by Louise at 7:50pm and seconded by Dave.