

September 2007

Big win in York Region strike over workload

Local 304 - York CAS settles after 17 days on the line!

In York Region CAS, following the expiry of the collective agreement March 31, 2007, Local 304 and the employer entered into negotiations.

Talks broke down Aug. 21, 2007 when the employer presented a "final offer" to the union and requested that the offer be brought back to the membership for consideration.

A ratification vote was held Aug. 23, and 89 per cent of the membership voted to reject the employer's offer. As the employer refused to resume negotiating, the 180 professional, clerical and support staff, members of Local 304, went on strike Aug. 27, 2007 at 12:01 A.M.

The outstanding issues were workload, wages and mileage reimbursement. The union sought to address a crippling workload through language proposals that would address case caps and the definition of active/inactive files.

Support

The strike lasted 17 days. Much support came from the OPSEU Executive, CAS Sector, OPSEU Region 3 Board Members, OPSEU Locals, Toronto and York Labour Council, CUPE locals and the media.

In the midst of the strike, York CAS Executive Director Martin McNamara retired and Patrick Lake arrived as his replacement.



Local 304's Erin Kinsley (l) and Lisa Maynard led the 17-day strike for better quality services, a workload cap and a fair wage in York CAS in late summer 2007. Photo: Luisa Quarta

Negotiations resumed Sept. 10 and the employer met the union's demands by providing language to impose "soft case caps" through a written commitment to adhere to case ranges, and provided clearer language on active and inactive files.

Also, the employer agreed to a 7.5 per cent wage increase over the two-year agreement.

A ratification vote was held Sept. 12, and 83 per cent of the members voted to accept the employer's offer. They returned to work Sept. 13, having successfully achieved the demands set by the members. **More photos inside!**

Local 304 makes big gains in York strike



Members on the line: Local 304 members at York CAS proved they were ready to stand up for fairness in this round of bargaining. The result: a 7.5 per cent increase over two years, and a big move forward on workload.

New Social Services Divisional Council

At our CAS Divisional meeting in Toronto in June, 2007, the delegates decided to approve the by-laws for a new Community Services Divisional Council.

The Council is made up of representatives from the Child Treatment Sector, Criminal Youth Justice Sector, Developmental Services Sector and the CAS sector. The executive is: Deb Gordon (Child Treatment Sector), Chair, Jonathan Guider

(Corrections), vice-chair, Violet Stringer (Developmental Services) and Rick Pybus, (CAS) secretary.

The second meeting was Sept. 11 and 14, 2007. The major initiative for the Council now is a workplace violence campaign across the sectors.

We in the CAS sector have already completed our workplace violence campaign in the spring, so the Council is using our materials for a springboard for the divisional council campaign.

Dues Reminder:

A reminder to CAS units that have not submitted their dues for 2006 and 2007: you will be receiving a letter by mail in the next month reminding you of the amount that is owed to the Sector. It was agreed in Sept. 2005 to pay \$50 per year in dues. Thank you again to the CAS units that have paid their dues.

Divisional By-Laws

During the divisional meeting in June 2007 we discussed the proposed changes to the by-laws dated Sept. 2005. A copy of the proposed changes and the rationale for those changes will be sent to the presidents or highest ranking officer in your local for feedback. Please add your rationale for the changes and send back to the sector. Please watch your e-mail.



OPSEU President Warren (Smokey) Thomas in Newmarket to support Local 304.

Please note that the OPSEU CAS website has been updated.

CAS member now an EBM

Congratulations to Laurie Brown, Local 116, from London CAS as the newest OPSEU Executive Board Member (EBM). Laurie has replaced Mary Ing, who recently retired as EBM from Region 1.

Harassment Policy

We would like to remind all locals of a decision made at convention that the Harassment Policy of OPSEU will be read at all meetings. This includes meetings at the local level. If you do not have a copy of this policy please contact your staff representative.



Local 304 celebrates the return to work.

Fighting for fairness !

OMERS

The executive was asked to explore the option of a Factor 80 and the ability of locals to independently negotiate a different factor with OMERS. As a result of this request the executive has invited Marnie Niemi, the OPSEU Benefits counselor, to the next executive meeting to discuss the early retirement factor of 80. We will ask her to explain the process of attempting to reduce our current factor to a Factor 80 regarding the OMERS pension plan.

Workload

Following our resolution at the Divisional meeting, the executive is continuing to Lobby OACAS for a third party workload review and we are working with OPSEU on further workload options. Updates will be provided.

Your CAS Executive

Rick Pybus, Local 441, Chair,
rbpybus@yahoo.com

Erin Kinsley, Local 304, Vice-chair
Sue Corlett Local 454, Secretary/Treasurer
Jane Kaija, Local 668, Member at Large

Thank you!

We would like to thank Brenda Mallott of London CAS for her years of service on the Sector Executive. Brenda has been an enthusiastic and knowledgeable member of the executive.



Rick Pybus, CAS sector chair, supports local 304 in strike efforts.

Brenda has agreed to chair the Bargaining council so her expertise at this level will not be lost. Thank you, Brenda.

New executive member

We welcome Erin Kinsley to the CAS Executive as the vice-chair. Erin works for the York Region CAS and is a steward with many years of experience in dealing with union issues. Erin has dealt with a difficult employer, she has been a part of the provincial CAS auditor general's audit, and recently helped lead Local 304's dynamic and successful strike for workload and wage improvements. See Erin's photo on the front page of this newsletter.



Produced by OPSEU Communications
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