

# MUNICIPALLY SPEAKING

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## Bargaining Training beneficial for Conference attendees



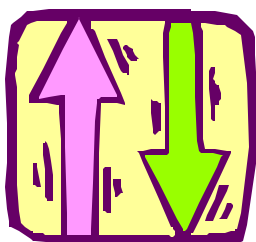
Locals that attended the BPS Conference in Toronto, June 6th and 7th were able to pick up tips and strategies to help in future bargaining sessions. We reviewed management strategies as well as tips on how to maintain a strong bond among members throughout the bargaining cycle. There was also discussion about co-ordinated bargaining, which is the ultimate goal for the Sector. Sector Chair, Terry Curtis, would like to see Sector 13 have a common agreement, which each Local could then build upon. Co-ordinated bargaining would give OPSEU covered municipalities more bargaining power in negotiations.



## OPSEU Basics

As part of our Sector Meeting on Sunday June 8th at the BPS Conference, OPSEU Staff Rep., Twila Marston, provided a mini training session on the basics of OPSEU. Twila gave a general overview of the structure of OPSEU and how the different parts all fit together.

Listed here is a very brief flow chart of the hierarchy of the different levels.



Local  
-  
Region  
-  
Head Office  
-  
Affiliations

All members of OPSEU belong to a Local; each local is situated geographically within a Region. There are a total of 7 Regions. Each Region has an elected group of 3 Executive Board Members. Head Office, located at 100 Lesmill Rd. in Toronto, is where the business of the Union takes place. The President and Vice President have offices located here ensure the smooth flow of the operation of the Union.

As a member of OPSEU there are also affiliations with Provincial and National Labour Unions. The main affiliations for OPSEU are with the OFL (Ontario Federation of Labour), NUPGE (National Union of Public and Government Employees) and the CLC (Canadian Labour Congress).

This is just a very brief lesson on how the Union is set up. We hope to provide more of this type of "Union education" in future issues of Municipally Speaking.

## Executive Elections Held at Conference

As part of the Sector Meeting at the BPS Conference in June, elections were held for the Sector Executive positions. There were no surprises and the Executive looks just the same as it has for the last 18 months. The results were as follows:

Chair	Terry Curtis
Vice Chair	Peter Pautler
Secretary	Sandy Sikora
Treasurer	Emily Alexander
Communications	Tara Langford

## How to reach us.....

If you have something that you would like to share with other OPSEU members, please feel free to contact either Terry Curtis or Tara Langford at the numbers and addresses below. We would like to hear from you about any of your trials or triumphs.

Terry Curtis (705) 645-3037  
Tara Langford (613) 267-4200 ext. 238 or  
TLangford@county.lanark.on.ca

## New Local Aims for Elusive First Contract

Local 494, comprised of employees from Community and Social Services, Community Housing and Ontario Early Years staff from the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville in Brockville, ON are struggling to secure a first contract. This group, which organised in late 2002, began their first round of negotiations on April 1, 2003. On the final day, they ended up applying for conciliation. We are preparing for a strike vote and are hoping for a favourable response should the necessity arise@.

Wendy Chow, President, Local 494

(Update: The members of Local 494 voted 80% in favour of a strike. The strike deadline is August 11th - best of luck to everyone!)

## New faces bring fresh energy to Local 324

With elections in March 2003, we welcome Vice President - Don Bryden, Secretary - Loretta Ryckman and Treasurer Jody Sohman as well our new stewards. We have a lot of new exciting and raring to go people.

We are trying to get a head start on our Collective Bargaining, which will be coming up in December 2003. Our ERC is still meeting on a regular basis, however very little is being accomplished. Communication between Management and the Union is breaking down and management are using a lot of the pressure techniques discussed at our bargaining training at the BPS Conference. We are seeing a lot more contract employees and less full time.

Sandy Sikora, President, Local 324

## From the Chair.....

I would like to thank everyone from the Municipalities Sector for coming to the BPS Conference in June. I hope the new members found it a learning experience and at the same time enjoyed themselves. It seems that the conference grows every two years and gets better. I would also like to thank the people that help to make it happen, from the Sector chairs, to the staff at Head Office and the Regional Offices. Thank you for all your hard work.

The Sector has had several meetings in 2003. Our By-Laws have been revised and brought up to date, our budget was set and now we look forward to setting a strategic plan for co-ordinated bargaining. My thanks to everyone who has helped in organising and running the Sector.

Terry Curtis, Chair, Sector 13

## Conference Well Received

The BPS Conference in early June was generally well received by those who attended. The training sessions and speakers provided beneficial information for everyone.

Since the conference is a little smaller than the Annual Convention, there is more opportunity to meet and get to know our fellow Brothers and Sisters. The BPS Conference also has the unique perspective of bringing together OPSEU members that deal with a multitude of employers, in contrast to OPS members that deal with the same employer. This perspective allows BPS members to share with one another different strategies for dealing with employers.

There were some concerns however with the location of the Conference. Attendees who did not travel by car, found themselves "stranded" in an area with little to offer. A location closer to the downtown of Toronto would be a far more accessible location and offer everyone more freedom in their leisure time.