

Social Mapping Project enters Phase II

Delegates overwhelmingly supported continuing to the next phase of OPSEU's historical Social Mapping Project. The project is an endeavour by OPSEU to gather a substantive demographic profile of its members: identifying existing gaps, barriers and areas for improvement, implementing policy changes and programs, measuring progress and monitoring trends and changes.

In 2009, one in four OPSEU members responded to the social mapping questionnaire. Expecting a modest response, that return rate is a

truly extraordinary accomplishment. Staff responded with an overwhelming 75 per cent.

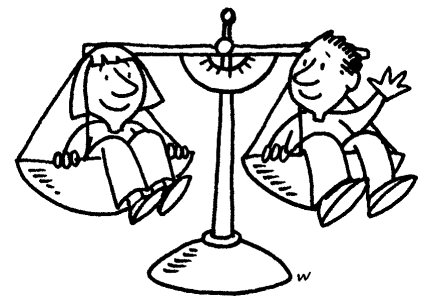
The next phase is to qualify the information collected.

That will be accomplished by holding focus groups, and looking at policies, practices and services offered by the union. It will identify barriers in delivery of services to see if certain groups within the union are being disadvantaged. The goal is to bring recommendations to Convention 2011, based on numbers, members' stories and experiences.

OPSEU is the first major labour organization in North America to undertake such a project. It has received recognition from other unions and organizations, such as the Ontario Federation of Labour and the Canadian Labour Congress.

The issue of social mapping was raised by the Workers of Colour Caucus to better identify and assist underrepresented members. The motion to undertake the project passed at the 2008 Convention.

Following the presentation by Paddy Musson, a member of the Social Mapping Project team, the majority of the delegates speaking said they were proud of OPSEU as a leader within the labour movement and the community.



Who is here?	
Delegates	869
Alternates	469
Observers	208
Retirees	7
EBMs	20
Committees	42
Solidarity Guests	20
Guests	57
Total	1692

Constitutional Amendments

Age limit not set for Young Workers Committee

Delegates turned down a proposed amendment that would set an age limit of 35 years old for members of the Provincial Young Workers Committee. Currently, the Constitution does not contain an age limit. Other organizations, such as the Canadian Labour Congress, have set age limits for their young workers' committees.

Delegates approve sanctions

A constitutional amendment carried to allow for sanctions as provided in the Harassment and Discrimination Policy. The policy is based on the Ontario Human Rights Code, which contains safeguards against misuse.

Elected terms remain the same

A proposed amendment would have extended the term of office for all elected OPSEU positions from two years to three years. Reducing the learning curve, cost savings and providing consistency were reasons given to support this amendment. However the amendment was defeated



Caucus amendment defeated

The Francophone Caucus proposed an amendment that would allow for that group to submit amendments to the Constitution. After healthy debate, it was defeated.



Resolutions

Open the boxes!

Members gave their unanimous support that OPSEU immediately mount a campaign to force the counting of the vote recently held by the colleges' part-time faculty and support staff. Once the votes are counted this could add an additional 20,000 members to OPSEU.

Decent public pensions a right for all

Members called for a resolution that OPSEU support labour's call for decent public pensions for everyone and for labour to mobilize toward a National Day of Action in support of pensions.

Time off policy amended

The Local Time-off Policy was amended so the funding calculation will read "a maximum of \$25 per member in good standing." OPSEU head office will contribute \$20 per member with locals contributing the remaining \$5 per member.

Maternal health and reproductive choices for women worldwide

OPSEU will call on the federal government to abandon its plan to exclude funding for abortion services from the family planning services that will be funded under the G8 maternal health initiative.

No additional staff positions

Members did not support requests for one new health and safety officer and one job security officer position. Some spoke to the need for increased protection in job threat situations, and others noted there are only two health and safety officers to service 130,000 members.



French language reforms

Members voted the French language version of the OPSEU website be kept up-to-date with all relevant information concerning job opportunities, the same as the English website, and that every position posted in English be posted in French.

Support for National Aboriginal Day

Fueled by strong support, OPSEU will lobby provincial and federal governments to make June 21, National Aboriginal Day, a statutory holiday.

OPSEU will request support for this issue from our labour affiliates.



No full-time book-off for composite locals

A request for OPSEU to fund full-time book-off for composite locals with 600 or more members was defeated. Even though members showed concern for the locals faced with demands of large composites, the resolution could have increased the budget by \$288,000.

No increase in hardship allocation

Support fell short to increase the amount of regional hardship committee allocations from \$1 to \$2 per member per year per region. Although locals are witnessing an increase in hardship cases, they are encouraged to handle these cases locally on a case-by-case basis.

Budget passes after lengthy debate

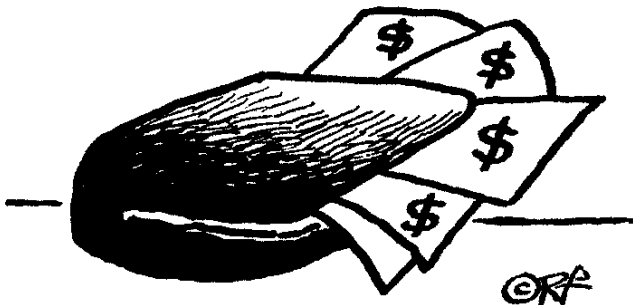
The wallet is closed and the books are sealed. The budget debate finished Friday morning with two more amendments from the delegates. The first motion was to add \$250,000 to battle the Liberals in the fight against wage freezes. The second motion was to increase the Provincial Human Rights Committee's (PHRC) annual budget of \$105,000 to \$155,000. The additional resources are to increase participation, membership growth and host a larger annual PHRC convention.

Through the course of Thursday and Friday's budget talks, a total of eight proposed amendments were put forth not including the numerous amendments to the amendments.

The four approved amendments break down as follows:

\$ 27,000	Developmental Services Sector pre-bargaining conference budget
\$250,000	Two new French language translators
\$250,000	Liberal's wage freeze campaign
<u>\$ 50,000</u>	<u>PHRC budget increase</u>
\$577,000	Additional expenses

Patty Rout, 1st Vice-President/Treasurer presented a nearly-balanced budget on Thursday. These amendments to the budget will increase OPSEU's deficit position moving forward.



In Thursday's financial report, Patty Rout mentioned some of the cost-saving measures that are being enforced. Options were also presented to reduce the deficit. While some delegates at the microphones stated that something needed to be done about the deficit, nothing concrete was proposed or implemented.



RESOLUTIONS

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Unanimous support for mental health funding

Passionate stories of waning mental health care funding led members to unanimously support an OPSEU campaign to secure provincial funding for health care programs. Smokey Thomas spoke from the floor of his experience in the mental health field and asked for unanimous support for this cause. Smokey is looking forward to taking our unanimous support to the Minister of Health. "Good mental health is a basic human right," said Region 5 EBM Nancy Pridham.

New forms good to go

New versions of expense forms will be created to speed up the expense refund process for members not able to bill-back wages. The new forms will be implemented within three months. This resolution will not add money to the budget and should help keep members active by removing the financial barriers that would prevent them from attending OPSEU events.