

April 2013

Public Service reaches tentative agreement: Province-wide ratification vote to be held

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Your SGEU Public Service Negotiating Committee reached a tentative Memorandum of Agreement with the government's Public Service Commission in late March. The PS/GE Bargaining Council has reviewed the tentative agreement and approved taking it to the membership for a ratification vote.

Member voting will take place at ratification meetings to be held across the province. Check the meeting schedule included in this report for the date, time and location of the meeting in your area. We strongly urge you to attend a meeting to learn more about the tentative agreement and to cast your vote.

This round of negotiations proved extremely challenging. The employer presented an unprecedented number of concessions and was unwilling to consider proposals brought forward by members of the bargaining unit.

The employer's hard line approach is unfortunately typical of current union-management relations. Unionized workers across the country have been pressured to accept concessions that erode workplace rights and protections. In some areas, unions have been forced to agree to lower wages and working conditions for new or less senior workers. In the public sector in other provinces, many unionized employees have seen little or no increase in wages and/or wage freezes.

In Saskatchewan, public service unions have been further hampered by **essential services legislation**, which makes it virtually impossible to pressure the employer to bargain in good faith. Without the ability to threaten to or actually withdraw our services, it is significantly more difficult to achieve our bargaining goals.

In the context of this hostile bargaining climate, we have been forced to defend existing rights and benefits, and fight hard for any improvements to the collective agreement.

Before we provide an overview of the tentative agreement we want to reiterate a number of the proposals that the employer tabled at the bargaining table. The following are some of the proposals the employer proposed that would reduce the terms and conditions of the collective agreement. The Negotiating Committee was able to prevent the following management proposals from becoming part of the collective agreement.

- **Scope (Article 2.1.B) 13)** The employer proposed changing the scope line in order to exclude employees from management level 7 and up from the union. Currently, only employees at management level 9 and up are excluded from the bargaining unit. This would mean a significant increase in out-of-scope positions.
- **Grievances (Article 21)** The employer wanted the ability to pay a maximum of one year back pay to union members who win grievances. This would mean the loss of thousands of dollars to grievors.
- **Temporary Assignment of Higher Duties (TAHD) (Article 12.1 A) 3)** The employer proposed to delete the article that states TAHD will be offered to the senior employee.
- **Term staffing (Article 6.2.3.C)** The employer proposed to increase non posting of term positions from 9 months to 12 months.
- **Subsequent probation (Article 7.2 A)** The employer proposed to extend subsequent probation to 12 calendar months from the current 6 months for levels 1 to 6.
- **Time In Lieu (TIL) (Article 11.6)** The employer proposed to reduce the current 90 hour TIL maximum to 60 hours.
- **Vacation in year of retirement (Article 16.5 F)** The employer wanted to amend Article 16.5 F so that employees retiring at age 65 who did not have 35 years of service would not be entitled to pay in lieu of their full vacation entitlement for that year.
- **Sick leave for part time employees (Article 17.4.1.C)** The employer proposed to delete this article. This would mean that part-time employees would have to report to the work place before they could claim sick leave.
- **Removal of disciplinary documents (Article 20.1 C)** The employer proposed to allow the ability to utilize disciplinary documents for an additional three years after they have been removed. This would mean these documents could be used for five years.
- **Payment for UMC members (Article 27.4.B)11)** The employer proposed to discontinue to pay UMC members if they were not selected by management.

The following is an overview of the tentative agreement

- **Panel Representatives (Article 18.1.2.2)** The employer proposed to eliminate leave with pay for panel representatives and with the cost to be borne by the Union. By 2017 the employer will no longer cover wages for panel representatives. Any cost savings will be redirected to the Health and Dental Plans.
- **Joint UMC Fund (Article 27.6)** The joint training fund has been deleted and the funding will be redirected to the Health and Dental Plan to ensure these plans continue to provide coverage for members of the bargaining unit.
- **Overtime for Field Employees (Article 1.1.I)** The definition of a day in the current collective agreement eliminated field employees who may have to work over midnight to be compensated at overtime rates. A new article will now allow field employees who work more than 11 continuous hours and it overlaps midnight to be compensated at overtime rates.
- **Increments (Article 14.4.2 B)** Labour Service employees now only have to work 130 days (previous 150 days) in a classification level to earn an annual increment.
- **Contracting Out (Article 19.5.C)** The contracting out language expired on September 30, 2012 and the employer refused to renew the expiry date.
- **Employment Security** - The employer refused to provide employment security for the term of the agreement. However, we were able to secure employment security for the fiscal year 2013/2014. Should an employee whose job has been eliminated not be successful in a job placement, and if there no position is available to bump into, the employee will be provided with the following:
 - Three months' salary continuance beyond the abolishment date and during this three month period, the employee may choose to resign with severance as per Article 15.14 plus a maximum of \$10,000 for outplacement and training (tuition) assistance (\$1,000 for every year of service to a maximum of \$10,000) OR
 - Resignation or retirement as per Article 15.14 plus a maximum of \$10,000 enhanced severance (\$1,000 for every year of service to a maximum of \$10,000). These are in lieu of the Career Assistance provisions in Article 19.6 and not in addition to 19.6.

Letters of Understanding in Corrections and Public Safety

Even before bargaining got underway, the employer served notice that they intended to open over 100 Letters of Understanding (LOU) in corrections and public safety for adult corrections and young offender institutions.

Adult Corrections

Four provincial LOU's have been negotiated for adult corrections which will cover all adult correctional centers.

Young Offender Institutions

Letter of Understanding 143 will be reviewed to ensure all letters regulated by this LOU comply with its provisions. This review is to be completed within six months of the date of ratification.

Monetary Items

Salary supplements for the following occupations were agreed to at the bargaining table: Child and Youth Protection Workers; Environmental Researchers (Foresters); Engineering Technicians (Irrigation Technologists) and 3rd class Power Engineers.

Shift Differential (Article 15.12.A)

October 6, 2013 – increase from \$1.60/hour to \$1.75/hour

October 4, 2015 – increase from 1.75/hour to \$1.90/hour

Weekend Premium (Article 15.12 B)

October 6, 2013 – Increase from \$0.60/hour to \$.85/hour

October 4, 2015 – Increase from \$0.85/hour to \$1.15/hour

Professional Fees (Article 15.11 A)

Professional fees due on or after October 6, 2012 will be reimbursed at the 2012 schedules.

Northern District Allowance and Custodial Allowances (Articles 15.4 and 15.7)

Increases will be adjusted by the same percentage as the salary increases.

Retroactivity

Upon written request to the employer within 120 days of the signing of the Collective Agreement, employees, except those terminated for cause, who have left the service after October 7, 2012 shall receive any eligible retroactivity resulting from the October 2012 general wage increase. Any entitlements not claimed within the 120 day period shall be deemed to have lapsed.

Eligibility lists (Article 6.1.11 A) will be no longer than one year unless mutually agreed to by the parties.

Merit Hiring – Pilot from July 1, 2013 to September 30, 2016 for levels 11 to 14. Candidates will be assessed on the basis of a “relatively equal” model which will assess candidates on education, skills, knowledge, experience and past work performance. The qualified candidate who is “relatively equal” with the most seniority shall be appointed.

NOTE: The employer tied a general wage increase in this round of bargaining to accepting a merit hiring pilot project and changes to the panel rep process.

Term of Collective Agreement

October 1, 2012 to September 30, 2016

General wage increase

- October 7, 2012 - 2%
- October 6, 2013 - 1.25%
- October 5, 2014 - 1.7%
- October 4, 2015 - 1.65%

Pension Increase (Article 15.15.2):

- October 6, 2013 - increase from 7.25% to 7.5%
(*Public Employees' Pension Plan*)
- October 6, 2013 - increase from 2.25% to 2.5%
(*for Employees in the Public the Service Superannuation Plan*)
- October 4, 2015 - increase 7.5% to 7.6%
(*Public Employees' Pension Plan*)
- October 4, 2015 - increase from 2.5% to 2.6%
(*for Employees in the Public Service Superannuation Plan*)

Health Plans Funding

Any health plan funds due to retroactivity will be allocated to the health plan surplus following date of signing, and after the surplus is topped up to \$15 million as per Arbitrator Ready's award.

The annual percentage of straight time annual payroll applied to Dental Plan Enhancements will be as follows:

.52% effective October 7, 2012
.53% effective October 5, 2014
.54% effective October 4, 2015
.55% effective October 2, 2016
.56% effective October 1, 2017

The annual percentage of straight time annual payroll applied to Extended Health Care Benefits will be as follows:

1.79% effective October 7, 2012
1.80% effective October 6, 2013
1.82% effective October 5, 2014
1.84% effective October 4, 2015
1.86% effective October 2, 2016
1.87% effective October 1, 2017

RATIFICATION MEETINGS

(IDENTIFICATION IS REQUIRED TO VOTE)

This bargaining update includes a meeting schedule outlining the times and locations of upcoming ratification meetings in your local.

Additional information will be provided at ratification meetings - listed on pages 7 & 8. Check to see the date for the ratification meeting in your area.

All members are encouraged to attend these meetings to cast a ballot. Representatives of the Negotiating Committee and Bargaining Council will be present at all meetings. Where presentations are not scheduled, representatives will be available during these scheduled times to answer questions.

It is your right as a member to vote on the agreement and we encourage you to cast your ballot. A member can vote at any time during a scheduled meeting on a come-and-go basis.

MAIL-IN BALLOT

Members who cannot attend the ratification meetings due to unforeseen circumstances may request a mail-in ballot. You may email Shelley Strachan at sstrachan@sgeu.org or call 1-800-667-5221 ext 226 and leave your full name, address, including postal code and the Ministry you work for, as well as your daytime telephone number where you can be reached if further information is required. A ballot and instructions will be mailed to you.

**Your ballot must be received at the
Regina SGEU office no later than
5:00 p.m. on May 30, 2013**

2013 Membership Ratification Meetings

Regina Local 1101 Teresa Clements – 924-9000 (B) or 924-3004 (R)

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
May 13	10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Presentation – 10:15 a.m., 12:15 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.	Regina - SGEU, 1440 Broadway Avenue
May 14	10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Presentation – 10:15 a.m., 12:15 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.	Regina - SGEU, 1440 Broadway Avenue
May 15	10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Presentation – 10:15 a.m. & 12:15 p.m.	Regina - SGEU, 1440 Broadway Avenue

Saskatoon Local 1102 Terry Ullman - 933-7247 (B) or 384-3911 (R)

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
May 15	10:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Presentation – 12:15 p.m.; 5:15 p.m. & 7:15 p.m.	Saskatoon – Army & Navy - Air Force Vet Hall, 359 1st Ave North (basement)
May 16	10:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Presentation – 12:15 p.m. & 7:15 p.m.	Saskatoon - Army & Navy - Air Force Vet Hall, 359 1st Ave North (basement)

Battlefords Local 1103 Mac Trost – 446-7819 (B) or 445-5020 (R)

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
May 28	4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. local time	Lloydminster – Royal Canadian Legion Hall, 4509 – 49 th Ave. Victory Room downstairs
May 29	12:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.	North Battleford - Air Cadets Hall, 792 – 111 Street

Weyburn Local 1104 Jay Donahue – 485-7120 (B) or 577-3132 (R)

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
May 22	6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Weyburn – Perfect Inn & Suites, 238 Sims Avenue

Prince Albert Local 1105 Pat Sander – 953-3180 (B) or 764-0358 (R)

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
May 15	11:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Presentation – 12:15 p.m. & 7:15 p.m.	Prince Albert – Union Centre – 107 - 8 th St. E.
May 16	11:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Presentation – 12:15 p.m. & 7:15 p.m.	Prince Albert – Union Centre – 107 - 8 th St. E.

Hudson Bay Local 1107 Donna Cook - 865-2522 (R)

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
May 21	6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.	Hudson Bay - Brooks Hall, 304 Main Street

Swift Current Local 1108 Arol Honsey - 778-8228 (B) or 773-1443 (R)

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
May 30	7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Presentation – 7:00 p.m.	Swift Current, First United Church, Burnham Room, 223 – 3 rd Ave. N. E.

2013 Membership Ratification Meetings

Humboldt		
Local 1109		
Mitch Ashdown – 231-4185 (B) or 554-4133 (R)		
DATE	TIME	LOCATION
May 23	7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	Wynyard - Legion Hall, 202 3 rd St. East
Moose Jaw		
Local 1110		
Denise Goski - 694-3828 (B) or 691-5360 (R)		
DATE	TIME	LOCATION
May 28	6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Moose Jaw – Union Centre, Main Hall, 1402 Caribou St. W.
Rosetown		
Local 1111		
Kirk Hogarth - 463-5400 (B) or 463-2871 (R)		
DATE	TIME	LOCATION
May 30	7:00 p.m.	Kindersley – Kindersley Inn, 601 11th Ave E
Nipawin		
Local 1112		
Brian York – 878-8823 (B) or 873-5334 (R)		
DATE	TIME	LOCATION
May 16	7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Tisdale – Civic Centre, 901 – 100 Street
Melfort		
Local 1114		
PS/GE Negotiating Committee – 1-800-667-5221 ext 206		
DATE	TIME	LOCATION
May 22	7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Melfort – Kerry Vickar Centre, Boardroom, 206 Bemister Avenue East
Yorkton		
Local 1115		
Derek Reiger – 786-1681 (B) or 786-6532 (R)		
DATE	TIME	LOCATION
May 21	6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.	Yorkton – Public Library, 93 Broadway St. W
Meadow Lake		
Local 1119		
Ernie Schwartz – 236-7540 (B) or 240-5055 (C)		
DATE	TIME	LOCATION
May 23	4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Presentation – 6:00 p.m.	Meadow Lake – United Church Hall, #502 6 th Avenue West
Estevan		
Local 1120		
Victor Lowey - 637-4596 (B) or 634-9485 (R)		
DATE	TIME	LOCATION
May 13	7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Estevan – MNP Place, 1219 5 th St. – 2 nd Floor Boardroom
Missinipe		
Local 1121		
Cenedella Lee – 425-4304 (B) or 425-3786 (R)		
DATE	TIME	LOCATION
May 22	6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	Royal Canadian Legion – La Ronge Ave.
Buffalo Narrows		
Local 1122		
Herb Norton - 235-1753 (B) or 235-4271 (R)		
DATE	TIME	LOCATION
May 22	4:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.	Buffalo Narrows – Court Room, Provincial Building, 310 Davey St.