

NOVA SCOTIA UNION OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EMPLOYEES NSUPE LOCAL 17 BULLETIN

Quality Inn Halifax Airport

Friday, August 21, 2009

Issue 2009-1

NSUPE Local 17 Elections

NSUPE Local 17 held elections at its membership meeting on August 18, 2009. One Executive position remains unfilled and the Local could use some more shop stewards. Elected were:

Executive:

President - Tom Dort
Vice-President - Sherry Thompson
Secretary/Treasurer - Vacant
Executive Council - Sherry Thompson

Shop Stewards:

Rhonda Fleet
Tom Dort

NSUPE Convention Delegates:

Rhonda Fleet
Shelly Clarke
Tom Dort

(One more to be chosen from Executive)

As a consequence of not filling the Secretary/Treasurer position, the union is holding workplace nominations during the week of August 24th and workplace elections during the week of August 31st.

If you would like to nominate anyone as Secretary/Treasurer or as Shop Steward, please see Tom Dort or Sherry Thompson to get a nominating form.

It would be helpful if you had the approval of the person you are nominating but Tom or Sherry will check with them anyway.

If enough people are nominated that an election is necessary, ballots will be provided during the week of August 31st. You will be able to vote by secret

ballot and the ballots will be counted on September 7th or, if all members have voted, earlier than that.

There is room for at least one more Shop Steward for Housekeeping as well as one Shop Steward in each of Front Desk, Van Drivers and Night Audit.

Shop Steward training to be provided

In the past Executive members have acted as the Shop Stewards. While some may still wish to do this, it is best if there are additional Shop Stewards available. Please consider making a contribution to your co-workers and to the workplace by taking on this important job.

The union will provide a training course for Shop Stewards and those who might be interested in the next couple of months. If you agree to be a Shop Steward you will not be required to act until you have had the training.

Sick leave difficulties and options

At the Labour Management meeting on August 18th, management raised problems created by the large number of sick calls received. It means (a) employees who are scheduled off have to be inconvenienced, (b) employees have to be called from the other hotel, (c) additional costs have to be paid in overtime or (d) go short-staffed and those working have more to do.

Management will be giving us the actual numbers, but indicated that some employees attend work regularly until they get their 240 hours in (6 weeks) and then the sick calls start.

Aside from inconveniencing the hotel and co-workers, such practices are likely to have an effect on employee sick benefits.

At the membership meeting we discussed some options which might allow employees to attend work regularly. These include: (a) having seniority count from date of hire and eliminating the full time/part time status, and (b) allow 3 or 4 day work weeks for those who wish to work less than full time, and (c) allow for 10 hour days on a shorter work week.

Of course these things will have to be discussed with management and, if necessary, possibly implemented on a trial basis to see if it works for management and employees.

If there were a number of employees who chose to work reduced hours that would allow the hotel to distribute those hours to other employees who want more work and possibly to hire additional staff to cover the hours.

NS tourism down

In other LMC business, management advised that tourism is predicted to be down by about 6% across Nova Scotia this year.

While the hotel has benefited somewhat from flights cancelled due to storms over the winter, the reduced travel is not good news for the industry.

NSUPE Convention

NSUPE will be holding its bi-annual Convention November 20 -21 right here at the Quality Inn Halifax Airport.

The agenda includes an educational session on Friday, November 20th, a social evening that night and the business meeting on Saturday, November 21st. Meals and accommodation are provided by the union.

The Saturday business meeting will include policy matters, financial report and budget review and election of officers for the parent union. A detailed agenda will be provided later.

Negotiations 2009

Our present contract is up for re-negotiation as of September 30, 2009. NSUPE Local 17 hopes to be in a position to present proposals to hotel management before the end of September.

Proposals are being drafted based on information provided by members during meetings called to get membership input.

Once negotiations start we will keep you informed about the progress as well as about the negotiating process as set out in the Trade Union Act, through meetings and bulletins.

NSUPE news

NSUPE Local 2 - Halifax Regional School Board custodial/maintenance employees - is co-sponsoring a Wellness Fair with the employer on October 23rd.

NSUPE Local 12 and NSUPE Local 19 - Canadian Blood Services employees in NS and PEI - are both in difficult negotiations. Local 12 has issued an alert of possible strike to its members.

NSUPE Local 13 - Halifax Regional Municipality inside employees - is in lengthy and difficult negotiations. No strike alert has yet been issued, but 18 more days of negotiations have been scheduled and a provincial Conciliator is on stand by.

NSUPE Local 15 - Homes for Independent Living (NS) - hopes to be submitting its proposals for a renewed contract very soon.

NSUPE Local 16 - Conway Workshop Association in Digby - has been in very difficult negotiations for some time and has issued a strike alert to members.

NSUPE Local 21 - Dalhousie University custodial/maintenance employees - is readying proposals for first time negotiations since the group came to NSUPE from an American based union.