

UFCW 832
October 5, 2021

Jeff Traeger:

Good evening, everyone. My name is Jeff Traeger and I am the president of your union, UFCW Local 832. I want to welcome you all to the October telephone town hall general membership meeting for members of UFCW Local 832, which is now called to order. Before we get tonight's meeting rolling, I want to say a huge thank you to the tens of thousands UFCW members that have been working to help all Manitobans get through this pandemic, which now appears to be well into the fourth wave. Throughout this crazy rollercoaster ride called COVID that won't let us get off no matter how sick we are, you continue to go to work on the front lines each and every day doing your part to keep our communities going.

Jeff Traeger:

The value that all of you bring to all of us continues to make me proud that I get to work with and for such an amazing and dedicated group of people. And when this pandemic finally does end, society will have to change to more fairly recognize the contribution each and every one of you makes. And employers will have to recognize that at the bargaining table as well. While I'm on the theme of repeating important information that needs to be remembered, I also wanted to let you know that all of us here at UFCW are working extra hard during the pandemic to do everything we can to ensure our members are safe at work. And we continue to be here whenever you need us as we always have been.

Jeff Traeger:

Our offices are under the same restrictions and protocols that many businesses are under, but our union reps, our specialists, our admin staff and leadership will continue to work on behalf of all of our members as we have throughout this pandemic because each of you deserve no less. Tonight is our fall meeting. We normally have four of these town halls per year with one happening near the end of the season. I say normally because we had to break it up this year by having our last general membership meeting in the heat of the summer on July 21st. At that last meeting, the only business we conducted was nominations for the recorder and 17 vice presidents on our executive board.

Jeff Traeger:

Those elections are currently underway by mail-in ballots that were mailed out to all Local 832 members on September the 29th. So each of you will receive a ballot along with bios of the candidates in the mail if you haven't already for the two spots on the board where an election is being held. That is for the diversity position and for the young worker position on our board. We encourage you to read about the candidates to learn more about them and make sure you mark and nail in your ballot in time to arrive at the post office before noon on October the 30th. Details of the process are outlined in the September/October issue of Union Magazine, and any questions can be answered by contacting the election chairperson, Sonya Taylor, whose contact information is in the magazine and on our website.

Jeff Traeger:

Democracy only works when we all participate. So we ask you to get involved and have a say in who represents you on your executive board by voting in this election before the end of the month. Another way that you can be involved with your union is by telling us how you think our member communications can be improved. You received a link to a survey by email yesterday, please help us plan the best way to communicate with you in the future by using that survey to provide feedback. If you complete the survey, you'll have a chance to win a set of Blue Bombers or Jets tickets.

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Jeff Traeger:

So on with the meeting. With me in the studio tonight is our secretary treasurer, Marie Buchan who will be sharing the MC duties with me and the two newest members of our leadership team, Ron Allard, who is the executive advisor to the president and Max Paches, who is director of IT, facilities and privacy. Also with us in the studio and at the controls is communications coordinator, Chris [inaudible 00:03:59], who really wants you to fill out that survey. Since we have a brand new leadership group since our last meeting, we thought it would be a good idea to introduce each of them to all of you here tonight. I will kick it off in just a few minutes by interviewing Marie who will then introduce you to Ron and Max so you can learn a little bit more about them as well, and maybe even ask them a few questions.

Jeff Traeger:

As we normally do, we'll take breaks in between to answer any of those questions you may have and those questions can be for Marie, Ron, Max or about anything relevant to all UFCW members. Remember that if you have a specific question about a grievance or an issue that affects your workplace alone, I would ask that you contact your full-time union representative whose name and contact information is available on the UFCW bulletin board in your workplace or online at ufcw832.com. We have a full agenda tonight, so let's get started. First order of business required by our bylaws is that we vote to approve three reports at this meeting. And they are the minutes of the previous full membership meeting, which was held way back on May the 11th 2021, the secretary treasurer's report on the current finances and the president's report.

Jeff Traeger:

We will not be reading these reports, which will give us more time for our guests and for you to ask any questions you may have. All three of these documents have been previously posted on our website at ufcw832.com for you to review, and they will stay posted there in our archives so you can see all of the documents from all of our telephone town hall general membership meetings at any time you like. Just a reminder, if any of you would like to ask a question, please press the star key followed by the number three and you will be placed in a queue to ask your question. I would once again, ask that you please remember that the purpose of this meeting is to discuss issues or ask questions about matters that affect all Local 832 members.

Jeff Traeger:

And if you have a specific question about your workplace or a grievance, you can contact your full-time union rep. So we will now need a motion to approve the minutes of our last meeting which took place on May 11th 2021.

Marie Buchan:

So moved.

Ron Allard:

Second.

Jeff Traeger:

It has been moved and seconded. So please vote yes by pressing the number one on your keypad or no by pressing the number two on your keypad. Once again, to get in a lineup to ask a question, simply

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press the star key followed by the number three and you'll be placed in the queue. With the introductory business done, I'd like to welcome our first guest who is the brand new secretary treasurer of the Local and someone who really doesn't need an introduction to most of you, Marie if you can. Good evening, Marie, and how are you tonight?

Marie Buchan:

I'm great, Jeff, thanks.

Jeff Traeger:

So you've now been in this leadership role for, I guess it's a little over three months. Is it what you expected it would be?

Marie Buchan:

Yes and no. The process and daily tasks are something that I was aware of being part of the leadership team as EAP and director of operations. When I became interim secretary treasurer, I started to see all of those tasks in more detail. What was really unexpected was how interwoven our roles are. We all know that the president and secretary treasurer tasked each and every day with overseeing all aspects of the Local, but the level of teamwork and trust in each other to fulfill these roles to the level required is at a completely different level. The phrase I got your back is an understatement in these two roles.

Marie Buchan:

When you first asked me if I'd be interested in filling the role of secretary treasurer, you and I sat down and had a very honest and open conversation about expectations of ourselves and each other. If we're not aligned and in sync, the Local can definitely not succeed. This, Jeff, is also a testament to your leadership and mentorship and what you bring to this organization. With each unexpected task, challenge or decision that I face, you always take the time to give an explanation and then support me for what I need to get the job done.

Jeff Traeger:

Oh, you're too kind, Marie. And I know you've worn many different hats in your career here at UFCW, but maybe you could take our members through some of the other jobs that you've done before you became treasurer.

Marie Buchan:

Sure. So in 2002, I started off as a relief servicing rep with the Local. In March of 2020, pardon me, 2003, I was hired as a full-time rep. From there I then became director of servicing. I was then a full-time negotiator. I then became executive advisor to the president and director of operations.

Jeff Traeger:

Oh, you've been in a leadership role for quite a number of years already going into becoming the treasurer. And as secretary treasurer, you are ultimately responsible for overseeing the finances of the Local, including working with our auditors and our accountant and bookkeeper and drafting the budget. So how are you finding that part of your new job?

Marie Buchan:

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So that part, I would say is extremely challenging, but something that I've come to really enjoy. I'm currently working on the budget for 2022 and the work necessary to complete this project is extremely time consuming and very challenging. I'm working through the process and making them my own. And I'm really proud of how I'm catching onto the steep learning curve.

Jeff Traeger:

Yeah, you actually are catching on extremely quickly, especially on developing the budget for 2022. I am impressed. Looking ahead, what do you think the biggest challenge you will face in the months or years to come?

Marie Buchan:

The first thing that comes to mind is not something that I just think I'll need to face, but I think that it's something that we will all need to address. I think that society as a whole needs to do a better job collectively at being less divisive. A lot of people have lost the ability to listen to an opposing opinion or belief and being okay with not agreeing with each other while still giving someone else the opportunity to express their opinions or beliefs. The pandemic has definitely shone a spotlight on this and social media does nothing but perpetuate it. It's so easy to hide behind a device and insult or shame someone with a different opinion. We are never going to solve problems this way. We will only continue to be divided.

Marie Buchan:

So this speaks to the work that I do each and every day at the Local, decisions in all aspects of the Local, servicing, negotiating, grievances, et cetera, are going to be made and not everyone is going into like those decisions. We will still need to work together for the collective whole and not always be asking what's in it for me or how can this best suit my needs? Learning to respect the decision or the person when it's not what we may want to have happened to us goes a very long way in building stronger relationships and ultimately a stronger Local.

Jeff Traeger:

Well, yeah, that's not what I was expecting you to come back with. But on the optimistic side, are you optimistic about opportunities ahead for UFCW and UFCW members?

Marie Buchan:

Absolutely. Each day I come into work I'm so proud of our staff team and how passionate they all are moving the labor movement forward. That is so important. We need to always be looking at ways to adapt to make this the best union for the members we represent. I've seen different committees start to take shape again with the youth committee and women's committee. And I'm seeing increased participation in our membership with things like our Sofa Series and our Union 101 webinar. UFCW Local 832 has always been a strong union. And with the support and encouragement of our membership, there's no limits to what can be achieved. In my first magazine article, I wrote about how proud I was that as a union, we didn't stand still during the pandemic.

Marie Buchan:

We all worked together and learned new ways to do things that we no longer could do the same old, same old. Not everything worked. Some ideas were better than others, but we continued to persevere

and ensure the membership continued to get the level of service they are accustomed to. If we can thrive as a union through COVID, we can get through anything.

Jeff Traeger:

Well said. Well said. Well, before I turn it over to you to take over the MC duties and interview the rest of our new leadership team, is there anything else you'd like to say while you have our members on the line?

Marie Buchan:

Yes. Thanks, Jeff. I want to start off by saying a big thank you to the membership and to the staff at the Local. Thank you for believing in and continuing to support Jeff and I in our recent election and in the years come. UFCW has given so much to me. It's given me a purpose and a career that I love while continuing to challenge me even after 20 years in. It's even where I met my husband, Scott. I take this role that I've been elected into very seriously. And I do not take this responsibility lightly. I don't want to end with a cliché, but I want all members to remember that my door is always open. There's room for all of us at this Local and our collective voices, ideas and strengths are what is necessary if we all want to succeed in the future.

Jeff Traeger:

Well, excellent. Thank you for that, Marie. I see by looking on the screen that the motion to approve the previous minutes has passed and we have only one person on the line to ask a question. So we'll get to that in one second. But if you do want to get in, remember, just press the star key followed by the number three key, and then we will take your question. So let's go on the line now to [Gulam Moore 00:13:33] from Garda Security. Go ahead, Gulam.

Gulam Moore:

How are you, Jeff?

Jeff Traeger:

I am well. How are you, sir?

Gulam Moore:

I'm fine. Thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to ask some questions. I have four simple questions I will summarize briefly, but these are in general, not specific.

Jeff Traeger:

Okay.

Gulam Moore:

Firstly, the Garda Agreement, what I believe last time was made for three years, what I feel it should not be. Second, my point is I had been here with them like 11 years or more. In between I have seen the rise in pay [inaudible 00:14:22] all the time, not even a single time a dollar was late. And third of my point is I have seen the company [inaudible 00:14:33] security people who are not, they don't have union, they're getting more pay compared to us. And my last point is, after serving much time, like 10 years or more, we don't see any sort of position for what we have been doing. That's all for the time being.

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Jeff Traeger:

Okay. Thank you very much for that. And I guess I would say, I think the, is Garda CBA up for renewal soon, or it's... Not sure when it's up for renewal, but certainly the length of the agreement is something that is often discussed at the bargaining table along with monetary package. Obviously if the employer's not offering better increases, then we look for a shorter term agreement and tell them that if they want a longer term agreement that they're going to have to provide more money. Now, as far as the increases at Garda, one of the things that we did for all security guards was to lobby the government for security guard minimum wage, which would've put the wages, not a dollar, as you said, but two dollars and 25 cents above the provincial minimum wage for the start rate for guards.

Jeff Traeger:

And it was the provincial conservative government that actually made the decision back in 2016 to 2017, sorry, to remove the third part of that provision, which was an additional 75 cents. As a result of that decision, the guards' wages have been frozen, the minimum wage at just over \$12 an hour while minimum wage catches up. So many guards have gone years, the ones with start rate anyway, without seeing that increased. And as far as the non-union companies providing better for their guards, I would challenge that because every time we start an organizing drive, quite often, guards are signing up to join our union.

Jeff Traeger:

We represent about 2,400 security guards and really the best way to improve the wages and working conditions and benefits at a company like Garda or Securitas or G4S or any of the other ones is for us all collectively to all be members of the union where we can use the improvements that we each get at the bargaining table for each of the companies. But thank you for your comments. I really do appreciate it. We're go to [Russell Schumacker 00:17:09] now from Brandon, Manitoba. How are you, Russell?

Russell Schumacker:

Hey, Jeff. Good. How are you guys doing tonight?

Jeff Traeger:

Doing well. Doing well. I got to tell you honestly, it might be nicer to be outside when it's... The weather that we're getting in October, I've never seen it like this before. But-

Russell Schumacker:

I know, it's really nice.

Jeff Traeger:

Yeah. Which is probably why we don't have as many people on the line as we usually have.

Russell Schumacker:

Probably. Yeah. I understand that. Okay, I'll cut right to the chase and ask my question. And I'm going to ask this on behalf of myself as well as all of Safeway members out there in union land. As you know, our contract is up for renewal coming up in March. And I was wondering, and I'm going to beat this dead horse into the ground some more, is it worth having our negotiators go to the table to try to get our employer to try to get this RX drug card, try to get something happening with that? I'm still a die-hard

firm believer in it. And I know if we have an RX drug card active and going in the system, that yes, probably more people will use it, but a healthy workforce is a strong workforce.

Russell Schumacker:

And that's why I'm still hell bent on trying to get something going on with this. And I just want to know what your thoughts are on that.

Jeff Traeger:

I'm going to tell you, Russell, I will be bringing that proposal to the bargaining table as well as other improvements to try to modernize the administration of your benefit plan. I don't want to say too much at this point, but there has been some discussions. The trustees have a meeting right away with trying to look at some options being offered by the current benefit carrier. And the other thing that we've done is we've recently changed the person or the firm, sorry, that manages our investments. We were having a difficulty with getting a good rate of return on the investments at the Safeway Benefit Trust. And now we're working with the same firm that has been helping our dental plan to recover from the shortfall it experienced about 10 years ago. So I'm optimistic for the future. That's number one.

Jeff Traeger:

Number two, I am going to table a proposal for improvements to the plan, which will include A prescription drug card for folks like you and many others out there, Safeway members and members who work at other companies that are part of the Safeway plan. Because don't forget that there are a few other companies that are part of that as well. So we're going to be going to the bargaining table hard. We have the first set for those who are interested December 2nd and 3rd. And this week we are selecting the bargaining committee. The bargaining committee deadline to apply was October the 1st. We received about 25 applications. And so that's too many obviously to have all of them on the committee.

Jeff Traeger:

And so not everybody's going to be able to make it, but we absolutely are getting the process started and getting wrapped up for what I think should be A, a very interesting round of bargaining, and B, it's going to be difficult for the employer not to offer significant improvements given on the amount of profits that they've made during the pandemic and given how hard our members have worked each and every day for that company.

Russell Schumacker:

All right. Thanks a lot. Appreciate your input.

Jeff Traeger:

You're very welcome. You're very welcome. We'll go to Robert now from Securitas. Go ahead, Robert.

Robert:

Hey, [inaudible 00:20:32]. Okay. What I was going to say is what I want to know is we're getting a golden opportunity right now, Brian [inaudible 00:20:41] quit [crosstalk 00:20:42]-

Jeff Traeger:

Hey, can we all cheer for that for a second?

Robert:

Yeah, of course.

Jeff Traeger:

Sorry to interrupt you. Sorry to interrupt you, but I'd just like to give a quick shout out to good old Brian. I hope he's doing well down in Costa Rica.

Robert:

Yeah. I hope he stays there.

Jeff Traeger:

Yeah, thank you.

Robert:

Okay. But what I'm going to ask is just the opportunity to confront the new leader, which right now I feel like would be one or two women depending [inaudible 00:21:10] the opportunity for us to go after Securitas to rethink their policy of antiunion, especially the security guard minimum wage. It's a golden opportunity right now [inaudible 00:21:25], get the feeling of these two women, what's their feelings about it? Because [inaudible 00:21:32] against us guards, but we'll see what the new ones are like. And hopefully we can get this [inaudible 00:21:39] back to where it should be.

Jeff Traeger:

Absolutely. And I just I'll make a quick comment on a couple of those things. You do know that they have removed Bill 16, which was something that we were all very concerned about, which would take away the right to binding arbitration after 60 days on a picket line amongst a whole bunch of other things. But I would agree with you that now's the time to go to the new premier. And I think there's going to be a certain amount of resistance necessary against union just based on the party that they're going to belong to. But a couple of things that I would lobby them on would be the security guard minimum wage. Absolutely because when the government took that away, they had a unanimous recommendation from both unionized security companies, non-union security companies and UFCW. And from the rest of Labor Management Review Committee made a unanimous recommendation to keep the minimum wage and the government took it away anyways.

Jeff Traeger:

And then also on the regular minimum wage, the regular minimum wage went up by a whole five cents. So think about all the people working in restaurants and hotels and people working in grocery stores and security guards and people working in a variety of industries where minimum wage is the start rate. And after a year of working through a pandemic, being on the front line, our government says, "I think you're worth a nickel more," which is embarrassing to me and ridiculous. And the sooner we can get to a living wage, which we used to say, hey, \$15, \$15, tell you what, with the cost of living increase, not 15 anymore. It's more like 16 or \$17 should be the minimum wage. And Manitoba is the second lowest minimum wage in all of Canada, which is embarrassing.

Jeff Traeger:

The last thing that they should do is government should put their talk away and put some action when it comes to their relationship with our indigenous communities in this province. All it would take to make truth and reconciliation, a national day for truth and reconciliation meaningful in this province would be to proclaim it as a statutory holiday so people could spend that day realizing the truth of the past and working towards reconciliation in the future. These are all things that the new premier should do. And I think these are all things that if the new premier doesn't do, then we need to elect a premier of a different color next time.

Jeff Traeger:

All right. So we're going to get back on track with the meeting now as no one else is left in the queue. So before moving onto our next guest, I do need to make a motion to approve the secretary treasurer's report.

Marie Buchan:

So moved.

Ron Allard:

Second.

Jeff Traeger:

So it's been moved in seconded here in the studio. So please vote yes by pressing number one on your keypad or no by pressing the number two. And if you have a question at all about secretary treasure's report or anything else at all, please press star three and we'll gladly take your question. So now I'm going to turn it over to Marie to introduce and interview our next guest.

Marie Buchan:

Thanks Jeff. So during the last GMM, we had interviewed new staff members at the Local to allow all of you the opportunity to get to know them a bit better. And let's face it. As exciting as Jeff and I are, we need to make sure we mix it up a little bit. I've had the privilege of interviewing today two individuals who are not new to UFCW Local 832, but are the newest members of our leadership team, Ron Allard and Max Paches. I'm so proud to be working side by side with both Ron and Max in their new roles. Both Ron and Max bring so much knowledge and dedication to their roles and to the Local. So let's get started with Ron.

Marie Buchan:

Ron Allard was appointed to EAP, executive advisor to the president in servicing, organizing and member engagement. I cannot think of anyone better to fill this role than Ron. As EAP, Ron oversees our servicing and organizing department and also works on additional special projects assigned to him by Jeff or myself. Thanks for joining us tonight, Ron, can you tell about your career history with UFCW Local 832 and your involvement with the labor movement in Manitoba?

Ron Allard:

Yes. Good evening everyone. I started out with UFCW Local 832 with Sysco Food Services back in 1992, where I was a shop steward on the shop steward committee, finally ending up in the role of chief shop

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steward. I was also elected to the bargaining committee shortly after I joined UFCW Local 832 in roles in the organizing, performing relief rep duties, and finally accepting a full-time position in the organization as a full-time servicing rep. I was a full-time servicing rep with the Local from February 2006 to September 2021. I became EAP in September of this year.

Marie Buchan:

Great. In your role as EAP, what excites you the most about taking on this leadership position?

Ron Allard:

Most exciting part of my new role is that I'll be a part of the decision process in making this union, UFCW 832 brand stronger.

Marie Buchan:

Ron, what would you say is one thing that members would be surprised to know about you?

Ron Allard:

I would say that the members would be surprised to know that I am indigenous. I am Metis and very proud to be the first indigenous person to be in a leadership role at the Local. I am also someone who can be shy when it comes to public speaking. I get really nervous right before, but as long as I'm prepared ahead of time, it is less stressful. The more I do it, the easier it gets.

Marie Buchan:

We will definitely make sure that we give you all the public speaking opportunities that we can. I just got a big eye roll from Ron for everyone who can't see him. You're doing great though, Ron. In your opinion, and in your new role, what do you see as the union's biggest strengths and challenges and how will you ensure that these strengths remain and we will work on those challenges?

Ron Allard:

Biggest strength is our work ethics that we perform on a daily basis servicing and standing up for our members and this must continue as one of the ways to show the membership we are here to support them. The Local's biggest challenges is teaching our members to be strong and that solidarity does work when we stand together.

Marie Buchan:

And finally, Ron, what can the members of UFCW Local 832 do to help you in your new role?

Ron Allard:

Be stronger together and let me know ways UFCW can improve to provide better service to you, the members. When you are letting me know, we need to have a constructive discussion. It can't just be, I am calling to let you know I don't like my rep. Each rep has a different style or way they will handle situations. But we all need to be able to address issues or concerns in a professional and respectful way. Come to the discussion with ideas and possible solutions. We need to think outside the box sometimes with new ideas and not be scared to try it out. If it doesn't work, we can always try something else.

Marie Buchan:

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Great. Thanks, Ron. I really appreciate you taking the time to be here and answering all of the questions. And again, if anyone has any public speaking opportunities they'd like Ron to be a part of, they can definitely let me know. We're really looking forward to seeing all of the new and exciting initiatives you'll bring to the Local in your new role.

Jeff Traeger:

All right. Thank you, Marie. And thanks, Ron. And I did notice that Marie forgot to ask you the last question. So I'll ask it now. And that is, who's going to win the Super Bowl this year, Ron?

Ron Allard:

Dallas Cowboys.

Jeff Traeger:

For those of you that don't know, Ron Allard pleads blue and silver. All right. Well, thank you both. And I see that the vote to approve the secretary treasurer's report is in pass. So it's time to make a motion to approve the president's report, which is the final document we have to approve at tonight's meeting.

Marie Buchan:

So moved.

Ron Allard:

Second.

Jeff Traeger:

It has been moved and seconded once again. So please press number one on your keypad to vote yes and then number two on your keypad to vote no. If you have a question about the president's report or anything else at all, please press star three and we'll gladly take your question. And speaking of that, we have one person in the queue. So we're going to open up the lines to Melody now. Go ahead, Melody.

Melody:

I'm in Brandon. Hi, I'm in Brandon.

Jeff Traeger:

[inaudible 00:30:02].

Melody:

I'm indigenous and I currently have been at my job for about four years, but I've been doing my job at Life's Journey for about 10 years. I'm taking an addiction and community workers degree online. It's a two year condensed into one year. It's tough. Oh boy.

Jeff Traeger:

[inaudible 00:30:29].

Melody:

But yeah, in Winnipeg they have an addiction counselor and in Brandon they didn't. So I took the course and it was 20 or \$19,700. I asked Graham, I said, "Graham..." I asked maybe someone else in human resources about starting, because I'll be done at the end of February, about getting a position there at Life's Journey for addiction worker counselor. And they said that they're not having one. There's no position, they're not making a position available. And I just, since we're all part of Life's Journey, Winnipeg, has an addiction center there. And I thought, well, Brandon, I thought it would be a natural thing for Brandon to have one too. And now I spent all this money and they're not having one.

Melody:

So I was wondering, is there anything that can be lobbied about getting... That's what I do. I work with people at FASD outreach worker. I'm doing the exact same job. Now I'm going to have the paperwork to back it up, but now there's no position available. The money's definitely not going to match my skill level. So is there any way to lobby a position for an addiction counselor which is highly needed in Brandon?

Jeff Traeger:

Oh, well, certainly we can have those discussions with your employer. Your rep would be more a steward and we can get [inaudible 00:32:24] to have some discussions with the Local people there. And then we can also have our rep in Winnipeg reach out to Graham who I think does work in Winnipeg at Life's Journey to see if there's any future opportunities there. Are you still studying now, Melody?

Melody:

I am. Yeah, it's 52 weeks. And I'll be doing my practicum in December. I'm not sure exactly where yet, but it's six weeks. I'll be doing practicum and then I'll be done at the end of February. So I was hoping, I don't want to leave Life's Journey, but I also have a lot of knowledge. I made it for a lot of people I think would relate to me being Aboriginal. I think that would get my foot in the door, make me more accessible, make me look less threatening, I guess. [crosstalk 00:33:19]-

Jeff Traeger:

Well, I will put our two reps together along with Ron Allard who we just heard from to have a discussion to see if there's any way we can lobby the company to consider this position. Or maybe between our reps and Ron, we can see if there's another company in Winnipeg or yeah, in Winnipeg that would offer that type of service that you could potentially apply to. I know you said you didn't want to leave where you're at right now, but sometimes when you improve your education, if your current employer isn't going to offer you something better, then you have to look at moving on.

Jeff Traeger:

And speaking of that, I see the vote to approve the president's report has been passed, and that means it's time for our last guest of the night. So I'm going to turn it back to Marie. Go ahead, Marie.

Marie Buchan:

Thanks again, Jeff. And I promise everyone, I did not want to ask Ron anything about the Dallas Cowboys. Our next member of the leadership team is someone who a lot of you probably don't know but have all definitely benefited from his expertise. And that's Max Paches. Max is UFCW Local 832's director of IT and facilities. He's also our privacy officer. Max takes care of all of our offices across the

province in Winnipeg, Brandon, and Neepawa, as well as our two training centers. Max also oversees all of our IT systems. Max always brings a calm demeanor to any and all problems that arise and trust me, he deals with a lot and remains very calm. We're all very impressed.

Marie Buchan:

He has a vast knowledge and expertise and is a true asset to the Local. So welcome, Max. And thank you for joining us. Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and how you got involved in IT and facilities?

Max Paches:

First of all, thank you for the introduction, Marie. Well, I immigrated to Canada with my family in 1998. First year of me being in Canada, I met a wonderful woman that I married afterwards and I've been married for as long as I can remember. We have four wonderful kids, three older boys and one younger girl who is only five. Boys are in the university and the youngest boy is graduating high school in this year. As far as ITM facilities go, I would like to take you way back in 1995 in Ukraine. That's when I graduated from high school and I had to make a choice which direction to take after that. And I was torn between network engineering and civil engineering.

Max Paches:

Applied for both in a technical university in Ukraine in Vinnytsia, which is the capital city of the Vinnytsia region, but because of the corruption and the need of connections in Ukraine back then, I could only get into civil engineering. However, I never regretted the choice. In 1998, when we came to Canada, I quickly realized that it's a land of opportunities and I decided to go off to my first love, which was the network engineering. And I went right into it, got a diploma and began my IT career. After doing several roles in IT, I started working as a contractor for myself. And in 2005, I got UFCW onboard as a client. I was doing some work for the training center. Then I started doing more work for the head office.

Max Paches:

And then later on in 2015, I was hired and I was given the [inaudible 00:36:51] position at UFCW. Once the opportunity presented itself, I started doing at UFCW both things that I was always passionate about, which is IT and facilities.

Marie Buchan:

Really fascinating, Max. Thank you. Can you tell us about what the director of IT, facilities and the privacy officer, pardon me, for the Local does in a day?

Max Paches:

To sum it up in one sentence, I can say that I do whatever life throws at me, or to be exact, whatever my 42 users throw at me any given day. To generalize a little bit, I support all technology and facility infrastructures for all UFCW 832 offices, including training centers. On IT side, it includes supporting over 100 computers in service, landline, cell phones, firewalls, routers, [inaudible 00:37:37], printers, TVs and audio, video presentation systems, all security and surveillance systems. I'm looking after the multisite network of 40 plus users, helping them with all of their day-to-day technical issues, adapting on a fly to any possible last minute request and changes.

Max Paches:

On facilities side, I do regular maintenance of all the buildings and building systems. And I also do the special projects. Whenever anything needs to be added or removed within the office or within the building, that's my responsibility to complete. I'm dealing with contractors answering any early morning or late night calls from security companies in most cases because the sensor got tripped by the cat running outside or the contractor forgetting to close the roof hatch on a building.

Marie Buchan:

And I can tell you as someone who got to relieve for Max while he was on a well-deserved vacation this summer, I learnt the number one rule in IT, which is unplug it, wait 10 seconds, and then turn it back on. So that about sums it up.

Jeff Traeger:

[crosstalk 00:38:38]. So true.

Marie Buchan:

Max, what excites you most about your new role as part of the leadership team at the Local?

Max Paches:

Definitely to work closely with Jeff, you, Marie, and Ron, and also the feeling of fulfillment. My role gives me the opportunity to interact with people and help them as the ITM facilities director. When I'm done with that, it gives me the feeling of excitement and accomplishment.

Marie Buchan:

Excellent. I'm going to remind Max of the excitement the next time three people have a problem all at once and it needs to be done right now at this very second. What do you think will be your biggest challenge in your new role?

Max Paches:

Probably the same thing that would apply to everyone, which is to me to exceed everybody's expectations. And of course, you can never please everyone, but you can always try to do your absolute best.

Marie Buchan:

Absolutely. What is something that members of UFCW Local 832 would be surprised to know about you?

Max Paches:

Well, at this point, I think members likely are not surprised to know that I get really nervous when I speak publicly. But another thing that is worth it to mention is initially I wanted to be a doctor and I was preparing for entry exams to the medical university in Ukraine.

Marie Buchan:

Excellent. Again, we'll see if we can get you on some public speaking tours along with Ron. So thank you, Max very much for joining us tonight and allowing the membership to get to know you a bit better.

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Max Paches:

Thank you, Marie.

Jeff Traeger:

Excellent. Thank you, Max. And thank you, Marie. Guess what, we have time for another question too but we don't have anybody in the queue. If you are interested quickly, do star three and we'll put you in the queue. And just a couple of announcements while waiting to see if there's going to be any more questions tonight. The first is that we have a welcome webinar being put on by our training center coming up October the 13th at 7:00 PM. So if you are new to Local 832, please join us and you'll learn a lot about your union and what we do. And then we have, on October the 27th, our Sofa Series continues hosted by [Aaron Selbi 00:40:45] and it is Paranormal Winnipeg, is the topic for October 27th.

Jeff Traeger:

Sounds kind of spooky and perfect just right before Halloween. And then finally, the Late Night Walk. The event to raise funds for leukemia research in Canada will be virtual again this year. That begins at 7:00 PM on October the 23rd. Our team has been put together. We encourage each of you to join and help us to raise funds for blood cancers. So we now have two questions on the line to take. We'll start with [Gazinder Singh 00:41:19] from Winnipeg School Division. Hello Gazinder, how are you?

Gazinder Singh:

Hi Jeff. Good evening, everyone. I'm good, you?

Jeff Traeger:

I am very good. Thank you for calling in. It's good to hear you again. For those of you that don't know, Gazinder was real big on our picket line with the Winnipeg School Division last year.

Gazinder Singh:

Thank you. And I just say hello to everyone, congrats everybody for new positions and thank you for UFCW for all [inaudible 00:41:48] members from all Winnipeg School Division [inaudible 00:41:50]. Thanks everyone. Have a good evening. Take care.

Jeff Traeger:

All right. Thank you, Gazinder.

Marie Buchan:

Thank you.

Jeff Traeger:

That's wonderful. A nice call to take. And now we have [Jidip Kumar Patel 00:42:00] from G4S. Go ahead sir.

Speaker 11:

Hi there, this is Jidip here. Good evening to everybody. So I have two questions.

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Jeff Traeger:

Good evening to you too.

Speaker 11:

First is regarding about the Youth Workers Internship Program. So we usually have every once in a year, but because of the COVID, we couldn't do it last year. But I have done it before for the Youth Workers Internship Program in 2020. There was lots of [inaudible 00:42:36] needs to be done in that course because I have a master's degree in finance and also the knowledge of the economy. So I have [inaudible 00:42:48] regarding the courses. So I also want to add on those things and help to be the UFCW Local employees [inaudible 00:42:58] for the worker's internship program. And the next question is, what is the deadline about Safeway's negotiation bargaining committee to disclose who's going to come for the bargaining committee?

Jeff Traeger:

Okay. So the first question on the youth internship program, I believe that there was some action this year that took place with respect to that, but what we can do is we can have the rep that looks after that, which is-

Marie Buchan:

[Jeff Bourgon 00:43:29].

Jeff Traeger:

... Jeff Bourgon, give you a call to follow up with you. The other thing that you asked about, and I was going to ask if it was you because I have you as an applicant on the Safeway bargaining committee. But you work at the gas bar for Safeway, correct?

Speaker 11:

Yes.

Jeff Traeger:

Yes. So you see, the gas bar is a separate collective agreement, and I believe you were on the bargaining committee last year when Kurt Martel negotiated that collective agreement, correct?

Speaker 11:

Yes. Yes. That's true.

Jeff Traeger:

Yes. Yes. So you're not a member of the retail agreement, which is what's up for negotiations this year. You have a separate collective agreement. So you're not able to bargain that agreement. You'll have to wait until the agreement is renewed for the gas bars next time around, and then you can join the bargaining committee then. It's funny that you mentioned this because prior to the meeting, I was reviewing the list and I was thinking, I should send you an email, but this is far better. We get to do it in person.

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Speaker 11:

Yeah. Thank you so much.

Jeff Traeger:

Okay. All right. Thank you very much too. And thank you for calling in and thank you for showing your interest in their union. So I want to thank all of you for joining us on our October telephone town hall GMM. We will be conducting our next GMM and our first meeting of 2022 on February the 8th, 2022 by telephone town hall as well beginning at 7:00 PM. So stay safe and well everyone, and thank you again for everything you do. We are now adjourned.