

**General Membership Meeting
Tuesday, September 20, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.**

TELEPHONE TOWN HALL

The General Membership meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Jeff Traeger, President, who chaired the meeting.

1. **Roll Call of Officers Present:** Jeff Traeger, **President**; Marie Buchan, **Secretary Treasurer**; Sandy Barylski, **Vice-President**; Kathy Brnjas, **Vice-President**; Alex Ciumac, **Vice-President**; Wes Connell, **Vice-President**; Charlene Desjarlais, **Vice-President**; Dianne Gibson-Pierce, **Vice-President**; Dave Hamalainen, **Vice-President**; Lisa Larosa, **Vice-President**; Frank Manaigre, **Vice-President**; Dean Rodwell, **Vice-President**; Roger Siemens, **Vice-President**; Deb Stewart, **Vice-President**; John Sulyma, **Vice-President**; Malcolm Welch, **Vice-President**; Tim Whitford, **Vice-President**

2. **2022 Town Hall Meetings:** President Traeger started the September 20, 2022 GMM by reading the UFCW Local 832 Land Acknowledgement.

Before starting the meeting President Traeger thanked the staff, Executive Board members and all of the UFCW members and union members of all colours who came out to the Winnipeg Labour Council and the Brandon and District Labour Council Day events. Local 832 hosted the Brandon event at the Richmond Avenue office and there was a great turnout at both events. We were very happy to be able to supply the food, hot dogs, chips, and drinks to the many union members in attendance.

President Traeger thanked all 832 members who continue to work through some of the most difficult times in our history. With COVID still here, the war in Ukraine and the rocketing cost of living caused by both of these events. The value that all of you bring to our society continues to make me proud that I get to work with and for such an amazing and dedicated group of people. All of us at UFCW are working hard 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.

President Traeger advised this meeting is the fall GMM Townhall, but after this meeting we will only have a short break and be back in a few weeks for our final general membership meeting on October 11th. This meeting is taking place because the International Convention is coming up in April of next year and nominations for delegates will take place. We will be running elections for those delegate positions

by mail-in ballot this fall. Check the Local's website or the September/October magazine for all the details.

Sitting with President Traeger for the meeting tonight are Executive Advisor to the President Ron Allard and Director of IT Facilities and Privacy and Office Manager, Max Paches along with Communications Coordinator Chris Noto. Secretary Treasurer Marie Buchan is driving to the Brandon Office for meetings and servicing.

President Traeger then reviewed the format for the Telephone Town Hall meetings where the President and Secretary-Treasurer's reports as well as the minutes from the previous Town Hall meeting are available on the UFCW Local 832 website for members to read and will be asked to vote and approve as posted.

3. **Special Guest: Kevin Rebeck, President of the Manitoba Federation of Labour**

President Jeff Traeger introduced Kevin Rebeck, President of the Manitoba Federation of Labour.

Discussion took place on the four pieces of legislation and how they are affecting the members.

- Minimum Wage: Manitoba had the second worst minimum wage in the country before the Provincial Government introduced some increases above what was normally scheduled. Minimum wage should be set at a living wage level so that people who work full time don't live in poverty and can meet a good basic standard of living. President Traeger and President Rebeck sit on the Labour Management Review Committee. This is a body made up of business and labour with a chair appointed by government. This topic is one area that hasn't found success in agreeing on the minimum wage and what it should be. After October 1st - and the previously mentioned increase - Manitoba will still be the second lowest minimum wage province.
- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation: This was also discussed at the LMRC and Labour and Business were able to come up with a joint recommendation to government to create a holiday. The government didn't follow the joint recommendation. This government moves very slowly on anything that makes a difference for workers. Over time Remembrance Day has changed and there are some allowances for other things to be open, but there are certain blocks of time where we know there are traditions and educational opportunities for people to honor lives that were lost in the past. There should be some protections for workers that allow everyone to participate in whatever new traditions might allow us to honor that memory and that we can do better. There should be consultations with the Indigenous community and have events in place for everyone to attend.
- Bill 64 and Bill 16:

1. Bill 16 – The Labour Relations Act. Review of the law that states that if there is a strike or lockout that goes beyond 60 days either side, not both, can go to the Labour Board and a decision will be made by the Board to settle the dispute and recommend a deal. The Provincial Government was looking to take rights away from workers and people who represent them even though business and labour together want this legislation to stay in place. The NDP and the labour movement were successful in forcing government to repeal this legislation.
 2. Bill 64 – Education Reform. This bill proposed the elimination of elected school boards, the creation of a provincial education authority, school division amalgamations reducing the 37 divisions to 15 “regional catchment areas”. Community, Union and the public stepped forward and the response rejected the ideas that this government put forward on education. With an election coming next year we are hopeful we can make a difference.
4. **m/s/c TO accept the minutes of the previous meeting of Tuesday, May 17, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. as read on-line.**

Special Guest: Kevin Rebeck, cont'd.

- Civic Elections are coming up on October 26th. This gives us the chance to decide who gets to make laws that affect us at the civic level as well as municipal and school board elections all over the province. At the civic level this determines how often your roads are cleared in your community or what policing level or fire support is available. These are huge budgets that provide all types of services that we all count on everyday. We can decide on electing people who believe in strong public services and we can help other unions who are directly employed by these by electing their leaders. By electing people that aren't going to contract out their work or do private public partnerships you can impact the services that you are going to receive as a citizen.
- Endorsing a candidate – this involves labour councils to put together people from different unions who have an interest in civic politics. They then construct a series of questions to ask these candidates such as where they might stand on public services, etc. These candidates are put through an interview process and through that process determine who has labour friendly policies and who the labour councils will endorse.
- Provincial Election/Private and Public Sector: The Provincial Election is where your vote counts and will affect labour laws, employment standards and workplace health and safety laws. The difference between private sector and public sector was discussed showing that UFCW is a primarily a private sector

union, whereas healthcare, education and social services are the public sector. The labour movement in Manitoba supports the New Democratic party. The NDP adopt a lot of positions that we put forward whereas the Conservative government try to put more and more on the private sector, often at great costs to individuals. The NDP convention is coming up October 14 – 16 at the Convention Centre and members are encouraged to get involved.

5. **Secretary Treasurers Report:**
m/s/c TO accept the Financial Report for the 7-month period ending July 31, 2022.

Special Guest: Kevin Rebeck, cont'd.

- **Manitoba Federation of Labour:** The Manitoba Federation of Labour is a central labour body. It is a coordinating body for the unions in Manitoba to come together to create a network to learn from one another and also to take the lead on legislative calls for action. This includes launching campaigns, government calls for a task force and the MFL would play a coordinating role to help identify people to fill those roles, but to make sure that no one is left out. The MFL is currently planning conferences such as the Health and Safety conference in February of 2023 and there are also a variety of workshops available on the MFL website.
- **United Way:** United Way works with labour. United Way adopts policies like not getting involved when there's a workplace disruption, if there is a strike or a lockout they will step back and they don't take a side. They buy union and they have unionized staff. All of their work is centered around capacity building to employers and other people to be able to learn skills and develop themselves to become more independent.

6. **Presidents Report:**
m/s/c TO accept the President's report as posted.

7. **Open Questions**

Throughout the meeting there was 7 questions asked and answered. All questions asked and responses provided are recorded and kept on file. The meeting was adjourned with some unanswered questions in the queue and the Union Representatives were instructed to contact those members.

m/s/c to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Recorded by Deborah Jones, Recorder

/lh cope 342

A full transcription and a list of members taking part in the telephone town hall are kept on file in a binder and stored with these minutes.