AGENDA

LABOUR RELATIONS BUREAU
REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, May 5, 2011
8:00 a.m.
17th Floor Conference Room
4330 Kingsway, Burnaby, BC

Voting Members:
Chair, Councillor Karen Rockwell, Port Moody
Vice Chair, Councillor Bob Long, Langley Township
Councillor Pietro Calendino, Burnaby
Councillor Barrie Lynch, Coquitlam
Mayor Lois Jackson, Delta
Mayor Peter Fassbender, Langley City
Mayor Brenda Broughton, Lions Bay
Councillor Cheryl Ashlie, Maple Ridge
Councillor Linda Hepner, Metro Vancouver
Councillor Bill Harper, New Westminster
Councillor Rod Clark, North Vancouver City
Councillor Mike Little, North Vancouver District
Councillor Deb Walters, Pitt Meadows
Councillor Geoff Meggs, Vancouver
Councillor Michael Smith, West Vancouver
Councillor Lynne Sinclair, White Rock

Non-Voting Members:
Councillor Darrell Penner, Port Coquitlam
Councillor Linda Barnes, Richmond
Councillor Bob Bose, Surrey

Please advise Sue Israel at 604-432-6239 if you are unable to attend.
2011 April 27

NOTICE TO THE GVR LABOUR RELATIONS BUREAU

Bureau members are requested to attend a Meeting of the GVR Labour Relations Bureau to be held at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, 2011 May 05 in the 17th Floor Conference Room, 4330 Kingsway, Burnaby, BC.

AGENDA

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA
   1.1 2011 May 05 Regular Meeting Agenda
       Recommendation:
       That the agenda for the Labour Relations Bureau Meeting scheduled for 2011 May 05 be adopted as circulated.

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES
   2.1 2011 April 07
       Recommendation:
       That the minutes of the meeting held on 2011 April 07 be adopted as circulated.

3. PRESENTATIONS
   None presented.

4. INFORMATION REPORTS
   Recommendation:
   That the report(s) be received for information.
   4.1 BCBC Publications:
       • BC Economic Index – Moderate Expansion Continues in 2011
   4.2 Recent Article:
       • TransLink Bargaining Bulletin – March 9, 2011
       • SkyTrain Workers Ratify Three-Year Deal
       • Prince Edward Island Paramedics Lose Right to Strike
       • Confronting Workforce Scarcity
       • Manitoba Expands Cancer Health Coverage for Firefighters
       • Clark Increases BC Minimum Wage after Decade Long Freeze

5. ACTION REPORTS
   None presented.

6. OTHER BUSINESS
   None presented.

7. RESOLUTION TO CLOSE MEETING
   Recommendation:
   That the Labour Relations Bureau close its meeting scheduled for 2011 May 05 pursuant to the Community Charter provision, Section 90(1)(c) as follows:
   “90(1) A part of a committee meeting may be closed to the public if the subject matter being considered relates to or is one or more of the following:
   (c) labour relations or other employee relations.”

8. ADJOURN
Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the LABOUR RELATIONS BUREAU held at 8:02 a.m. on Thursday, 2011 April 07 in the 17th Floor Conference Room at 4330 Kingsway, Burnaby, B.C.

LRB Members
Present: Councillor Karen Rockwell, Port Moody (Chair)
Councillor Bob Long, Langley Township (Vice Chair)
Councillor Barrie Lynch, Coquitlam
Mayor Lois Jackson, Delta
Mayor Peter Fassbender, Langley City
Councillor Joanne Ronsley, Lions Bay (Alternate)
Councillor Cheryl Ashlie, Maple Ridge
Councillor Linda Hepner, Metro Vancouver
Councillor Bill Harper, New Westminster
Councillor Rod Clark, North Vancouver City
Councillor Mike Little, North Vancouver District
Councillor Deb Walters, Pitt Meadows
Councillor Geoff Meggs, Vancouver
Councillor Lynne Sinclair, White Rock
Councillor Michael Smith, West Vancouver

LRB Non-Voting Members: Councillor Darrell Penner, Port Coquitlam
Councillor Greg Halsey-Brandt, Richmond (Alternate)
Councillor Bob Bose, Surrey

Staff: Paul Daminato, CAO New Westminster and Chair of RAAC
John Leeburn, Executive Director to the CAO and Chair of HRAC
Malcolm Graham, Manager Labour Relations
David Gilbride, Division Manager Compensation and Research
Paul Strangway, Senior Negotiator
Rhonda Bender, Negotiator
Sue Israel, Recording Secretary

Delegation: Mr. James E. Dorsey, Q.C., LR Specialist

AGENDA: 1. It was MOVED and SECONDED
That the agenda for the Labour Relations Bureau meeting scheduled for 2011 April 07 be adopted, as circulated.
CARRIED

MINUTES: 2. It was MOVED and SECONDED
That the minutes of meetings held on 2011 February 03 and 2011 March 03 be adopted, as circulated
CARRIED

MATTERS ARISING: 3. None presented.
INFORMATION REPORTS:
4. None presented.

ACTION REPORTS:
5. None presented.

CLOSE MEETING:
6. It was MOVED and SECONDED
   That the Labour Relations Bureau close its regular meeting
   scheduled for 2011 April 07 pursuant to the Community Charter
   provision, Section 90(1)(c) as follows:
   “90(1) A part of a committee meeting may be closed to the public if the
   subject matter being considered relates to or is one of more of the
   following:
   (c) labour relations or other employee relations.”
   CARRIED

6.1 It was MOVED and SECONDED
    That the meeting concluded at 8:02 a.m.
    CARRIED

Karen Rockwell,
Chair

Sue Israel,
Recording Secretary
Labour Relations Bureau Meeting Date: 2011 May 05

To: Labour Relations Bureau

From: Labour Relations Department

Date: 2011 April 28

Subject: Business Council of BC Publications – BC Economic Index - “Moderate Expansion Continues in 2011”

Recommendation:

That the report be received for information.

1. PURPOSE

To provide the Labour Relations Bureau with the most recent economic update from the Business Council of British Columbia.

2. CONTEXT

At the Bureau 2009 September 03 meeting, there was a request for staff to provide members with updates on economic forecasting from time to time to share with their respective Councils.
BC ECONOMIC INDEX
Vol. 10 No. 1 - April 19, 2011

MODERATE EXPANSION CONTINUES IN 2011

The BC Economic Index posted a 0.6% quarterly increase in the first quarter of the year, essentially matching the Q4 2010 rise. The good news is that consecutive quarterly gains in the Index of this magnitude indicate the economy is on a solid footing. But a cautionary note is that growth remains on the soft side considering the depth of the 2008/09 recession. With growth having slowed quite sharply from the early stages of the recovery, BC’s unemployment rate remains in excess of 8%. For it to move lower will require more job creation which ultimately depends on a return to more robust economic conditions.

The different component indicators used to compile the Index show that the domestic side of the BC economy has weakened, with the increase in the Index resting on exports and favourable external conditions. Both employment and retail sales contracted in Q1, dampening the overall gain in the Index. During periods of economic expansion, both of these indicators usually increase, at least slightly, from quarter to quarter. To have both of them in negative territory points to soft domestic conditions. The number of international visitors also moved lower and was the other negative element in the first quarter.

On the positive side, non-residential building permits and the Canadian Leading indicator each provided a large lift to the Index. The non-residential permits indicator, however, enters into the Index with a lag, so the latest gain reflects strength a few months back. More recently, non-residential permits have fallen. So even though permits provided a lift in Q1, this indicator will temper gains in the Index in the next few months. A jump in housing starts at the end of 2010 also helped drive the Index higher in Q1. Manufacturing shipments are the final positive indicator. Thanks mostly to strong demand in China but also to some improvement in the US, manufacturing output in BC has climbed over the past 18 months. Shipments serve as a proxy for exports in the Index.

While the Index indicates BC’s economic expansion continued at a modest pace in the first quarter of 2011, the composition and performance of the component indicators underscores the fact that recovery on the domestic side remains muted, which is part of the reason the Index is only now returning to its pre-recession levels. We anticipate improvements in employment and spending, but if these fail to materialize by the second half of the year, then economic growth for 2011 is likely to disappoint.

Ken Peacock
Director Economic Research
Labour Relations Bureau Meeting Date: 2011 May 05

To: Labour Relations Bureau
From: Labour Relations Department
Date: 2011 April 28
Subject: Recent Articles

Recommendation:
That the report be received for information.

1. PURPOSE

To make the Labour Relations Bureau aware of some recent articles pertaining to Human Resources and Labour Relations in the Region.

2. CONTEXT

The following articles are attached for information purposes.

- TransLink Bargaining Bulletin – March 9, 2011
- SkyTrain Workers Ratify Three-Year Deal
- Prince Edward Island Paramedics Lose Right to Strike
- Confronting Workforce Scarcity
- Manitoba Expands Cancer Health Coverage for Firefighters
- Clark Increases BC Minimum Wage after Decade Long Freeze
TransLink Bargaining Bulletin

Wednesday, March 9, 2011

To All COPE 378 Members at TransLink

Your bargaining committee has reached a tentative one year deal with TransLink. The agreement would span from April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011, include a 3% wage increase, and some minor housekeeping details.

The agreement was reached to facilitate the transfer of the IT section into TransLink. Since the term of the tentative agreement covers the last year, if you ratify the deal, your bargaining committee would very quickly enter into negotiations again.

Several meetings have been scheduled in order to ensure that members have an opportunity to view the agreement and vote on its ratification. Please make sure you are able to attend one of these meetings and have the opportunity to vote on your new Collective Agreement.

March 16
New Westminster
UFCW Hall
350 Columbia Street
10 AM and 5 PM

Metrotower at Metrotown
23rd Floor - 4720 Kingsway
12 PM
Marketwire

SkyTrain workers ratify three-year deal

Tue Apr 12 2011, 1:26pm ET
Dateline: BURNABY, BRITISH COLUMBIA

BURNABY, BRITISH COLUMBIA--(Marketwire - April 12, 2011) - Members of CUPE 7000, SkyTrain workers, have ratified a three-year agreement with the British Columbia Rapid Transit Company (BCRTC).

The agreement includes improvements to language such as shift differentials; a comparator wage adjustment of three per cent with a one-half per cent lift for trades in the first year; wage increases in years two and three will match those of other transit workers under Translink who are currently in negotiations; and the creation of a joint committee to examine and recommend a pension plan for CUPE 7000 members.

"Our members want to move towards a defined benefit plan that allows people to retire with a sense of security," says CUPE 7000 vice-president and member of the bargaining committee Bill Magri. "Now we'll have a process to follow and if we can't reach agreement at the end of the day, it goes to binding arbitration."

The joint employer/union task force will review the existing defined contribution plan as well as defined benefit plans like the Public Service Pension Plan and the Municipal Pension Plan. The task force is expected to make recommendations by fall 2012. If the employer and union reach an agreement, CUPE 7000 members will hold a ratification vote on the new plan. If no agreement can be reached, the issue will go to binding arbitration.

The British Columbia Rapid Transit Company Ltd. is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Translink. The BCRTC operates SkyTrain's Millennium and Expo Lines.

CUPE 7000 represents 530 members at SkyTrain including attendants, control room operators, administrative staff and technical and trades workers who maintain trains, tracks and stations.

-30-

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Bill Magri     CUPE 7000 vice-president
604.612.6432

or

David Fleming     CUPE representative
778.928.7542

or

Janet Szliske     CUPE Communications
604.454.7293

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PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND PARAMEDICS LOSE RIGHT TO STRIKE

Prince Edward Island's paramedics, without a collective agreement since September 30, 2009, are angry that they were blindsided with unexpected legislation taking away their right to strike, but they have decided to accept the essential service designation without a fight.

Bill 35, which was introduced in the PEI legislature on December 1 by the Liberal government of Premier Robert Ghiz and passed into law on December 8, amends the provincial Labour Act to add employees of ambulance service providers as well as dispatchers for police, fire and ambulance services to the list of essential workers who cannot strike but must instead go to binding arbitration if contract negotiations break down. The amendment came into force on January 1, 2011.

The Canadian Union of Public Employees was particularly angry about the lack of any consultation or even advance warning by the government. "Not even the decency of a phone call. We have to find out from a third party that the government has taken that right away," complained CUPE spokesman Bill MacKinnon, saying that the union found out about the legislation from an employer representative at the bargaining table the morning after it was tabled in the legislature.

MacKinnon said that "[f]rankly, the lack of consultation and decency of notification is becoming a trademark of this government. The local bargaining committee is frustrated." He also questioned the need for the legislation, saying that "for whatever reason, the government chose to alter legislation that frankly has worked very well at the bargaining table historically. I'm not aware of any strike paramedics have ever had in any form on the Island. With this gone, it certainly changes the dynamic at the bargaining table and particularly in this round where we're right in the midst of it."

Premier Ghiz was unrepentent, however. He told reporters: "How would you like it if the ambulance workers went on strike and you took a heart attack and you couldn't get an ambulance? Plain and simple. The rest of the health care system is under the same rules, as well."

Labour Minister Janice Sherry called the expansion of the essential services designation "a tough but necessary move."

Although CUPE decided against attempting to dig in against the legislation, it did try to wring from the government a commitment to assume the costs of binding arbitration. "We should not have to pay for that privilege," CUPE spokesman MacKinnon said: "If government is going to use its legislative power, then there has to be some responsibility that goes with that power. And we think paying for the process is reasonable."

The government refused the union's request, however. Now CUPE says that it is setting its sights on a public awareness campaign about the issue during the period leading up to the next provincial election, which is set by legislation for October 3, 2011.

Read a Charlottetown Guardian news story about the introduction of the Labour Act amendments, and see a CBC news story about the passage of the legislation.
Confronting Workforce Scarcity

By Jock Finlayson

The BC government recently published an updated labour market outlook covering the period to 2019. With the front-end of the baby-boom generation now reaching retirement age, the number of people leaving the work force is set to balloon. According to the government’s projections, BC will have 1.1 million job openings in the next decade. Some of these will arise as current workers retire, while others will reflect economic and population growth. Specifically, 675,000 of the 1.1 million job openings over the period 2009-2019 are expected to occur due to retirements, while the remainder will be attributable to economic growth.

Where will the new workers come from? The government forecasts that 650,000 young people will graduate from the province’s educational institutions over the next ten years. This leaves an initial “labour supply gap” of some 450,000. Part of this will be met by international immigration – the dominant source of population growth in BC. A smaller portion of the gap will be filled by in-migration from other provinces.

Nonetheless, even with regular inflows of international and inter-provincial migrants, BC’s labour market is destined to move toward a state of relative “scarcity” in the future. Many employers will find that the pool of qualified candidates to staff vacant positions is becoming progressively smaller, and also that it takes longer to fill positions. In addition, a tighter job market promises to put upward pressure on compensation costs in many industries and occupations. The changing labour market described above is not unique to British Columbia. Indeed, as the world economy continues to recover from the 2008-09 recession, talent scarcity is quickly becoming a global-scale phenomenon. As a new report jointly authored by the World Economic Forum and Boston Consulting Group (BCG) puts it:

“Despite today’s high unemployment rates, the global talent risk is growing. Soon, staggering talent gaps will appear in large parts of the world. Economies will struggle to remain competitive while organizations...compete for talent on an unprecedented scale.”

Across the developed world, steadily aging populations and the retirement of the huge baby-boom generation will present employers with big challenges around the management of workforce quantity, quality and costs. Globalization has extended its reach to the job market: talent mobility is rising, as an increasingly well-educated global population becomes more comfortable with the idea of working in a different country, culture or industry. Both individual employers and regional economies will be competing for the best and the brightest in fields ranging from IT to health care, management, skilled technical occupations, the professions, and scientific research.

Faced with an emerging world of growing talent scarcity, how should employers respond? The World Economic Forum/BCG study and our own work at the Business Council of BC points to a number of strategies:

**Undertake strategic workforce planning.** Modeling workforce demographics and labour supply and demand dynamics for different job families and occupations is becoming commonplace in large organizations. Governments are also following this path, as evidenced by the BC government’s latest labour market projection study.

**Ease labour migration across borders.** Economic success increasingly will hinge on the ability to access global talent pools. Outsourcing is one way to do this, but it is no panacea. Canada is fortunate because we attract substantial numbers of educated newcomers. However, recent immigrant cohorts have been faring poorly in the job market. It’s time for the employer community to step up its engagement with immigration issues to ensure that Canada’s immigration regime is tailored to meet the country’s economic and labour market needs.

**Increase skills.** Improving skill levels, including literacy skills, across the population can expand the size and improve the productivity of the labour force. A top priority is to build and adaptable, efficient education system that encompasses both practical and theoretical skills along with life-long learning and upskilling of the existing workforce. It is also important to continue to raise the proportion of the working-age population with a post-secondary education. In BC, more than three-quarters of new jobs are expected to require some type of post-secondary credential (a degree, diploma, or recognized trades qualification); today, 67 percent of the province’s workforce meets this test.

**Expand the domestic labour pool.** Governments and employers have a shared interest in boosting labour market participation rates among traditionally “under-represented” groups – aboriginals, the disabled, older workers, and new immigrants – as part of a broader effort to increase labour supply. These measures can help to expand the supply of qualified labour and make better use of existing endowments of human capital. However, even if governments, employers and educators take action in all of the above noted areas, demographic forces mean that talent scarcity increasingly will be the new reality facing human resource managers everywhere.

Jock Finlayson is the Executive Vice President of the Business Council of BC. (PeopleTalk: Spring 2011)
MANITOBA EXPANDS CANCER HEALTH COVERAGE FOR FIREFIGHTERS

Manitoba, which in 2002 became the first Canadian province to recognize cancer as an occupational illness for firefighters, is again leading the way – this time, by being the first to add breast cancer to the list of occupational health hazards for female firefighters.

On December 7, 2010, Jennifer Howard, Manitoba's minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board, introduced in the legislature Bill 6, which adds breast cancer and three other cancers – multiple myeloma, primary site prostate, and skin cancer – to 10 other illnesses already covered for firefighters by workers' compensation in Manitoba.

Research has found that more than 200 carcinogens that cause breast cancer are present at fires, making this one of the occupational cancers to which female firefighters are most susceptible. Female firefighters are three to five times more at the risk of being diagnosed with breast cancer than women in the general population, according to statistics cited by the United Fire Fighters of Winnipeg and the Manitoba government. Winnipeg currently employs 43 female firefighters, one of the highest numbers in the country.

Alex Forrest, president of the United Fire Fighters of Winnipeg, praised the Manitoba government for taking the lead in including breast cancer on its list of occupational diseases related to firefighting. Forrest, who has traveled across North America speaking about Manitoba's firefighter health legislation and urging others to follow suit, said that "I'm not aware of any jurisdiction in the world that has legislation of this type that's going to protect our sister firefighters."

He said that because there are comparatively few female firefighters, and particularly long-serving ones, research on how the profession affects women's health has lagged behind the work done with regard to their male counterparts. "We have file cabinets full of firefighting studies, but it's all male-based," Forrest said.

When Manitoba's legislation was first introduced in 2002, the cancers initially covered were primary site brain cancer, bladder or kidney cancer, and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and leukemia.

The coverage was expanded in 2005 to include colon and ureter cancers and lung cancer in non-smokers, as well as heart attacks within 24 hours of emergency responses.

Read a CBC news story about expanded cancer coverage for Manitoba firefighters.
Clark increases B.C. minimum wage after decade-long freeze

By SUNNY DHILLON and JUSTINE HUNTER
From Thursday's Globe and Mail

B.C.'s rate, the lowest in Canada, will rise to $10.25 an hour in May, 2012

Three days into her new government, Premier Christy Clark said goodbye to two of her predecessor Gordon Campbell's sturdiest policy planks by increasing the minimum wage and wiping out B.C.'s controversial training rate.

At a news conference in Victoria alongside her new Minister of Labour, Ms. Clark said the "long-overdue" decision reflected her commitment to help low-income families. B.C.'s minimum wage is the lowest in the country and has remained at $8 an hour since 2001.

The minimum wage will be raised to $8.75 on May 1. It will increase to $9.50 on Nov. 1, before hitting $10.25 in May, 2012. The $6 training wage will be repealed as of May, and a separate minimum wage for liquor servers will come into effect.

"Many from lower-income families in this province are finding it harder than ever to keep up," Ms. Clark told reporters. "There is no quick fix for that. It is going to be an ongoing focus of our government to make sure that families are at the centre of our agenda and that it's a little bit easier for people who are struggling to get ahead."

Ms. Clark said she's no stranger to minimum wage, having held down jobs as a waitress and short-order cook.

The restaurant and business communities were the harshest critics of the increase, arguing it will lead to layoffs.

"We are really quite concerned as to the magnitude of the increase," said Ian Tostenson, president and chief executive officer of the BC Restaurant and Foodservices Association.

Mr. Tostenson said the increase should have been between 25 and 50 cents an hour and is another blow to an industry already hurt by the economy, the harmonized sales tax and rising food prices.

"The question that I'm now fielding, which is coming from the business community, is how do you pay for increasing your wage cost when you're in a market that's flat and or losing sales?" he said.

John Winter, president and chief executive officer of the BC Chamber of Commerce, said he would have preferred the increase be implemented over two years.

"It still strikes us as being an awful lot very quickly," he said. "We would have liked to have seen that extended a little further in terms of the time frame. Many small businesses are still struggling to make ends meet coming out of the recession. The timing is never right, but this is not particularly good." Mr. Winter said a minimum wage increase generally results in younger workers getting fewer hours.
Said Mr. Tostenson: "My fear is that we're going to start to lose some employment over this."

Opposition New Democrats and labour advocates weren't completely satisfied either. They expressed frustration that it took a decade for the increase to be announced, and that it will be more than a year before the $10.25-an-hour wage comes into effect.

Jim Sinclair, president of the BC Federation of Labour, took issue with the job-losses threat, however, calling it a "bogeyman."

"I don't believe businesses make it or break it on these kinds of wages," he said.

Raj Chouhan, the NDP's labour critic, said the minimum wage increase is only a first step toward addressing poverty. He said his party is calling for a comprehensive strategy that addresses its root causes.

Ms. Clark promised to increase the minimum wage as part of her leadership bid. She was sworn in as Premier on Monday and the change was approved at her first formal cabinet meeting on Wednesday.

"Being last in the country on minimum wage isn't where we want to be," she said, adding the increase could mean more than $4,000 additional dollars annually for a full-time employee. About 41,000 British Columbians earned the minimum wage or less in 2009.

The minimum wage for alcohol servers is currently $8 an hour. It will rise to $8.50 on May 1, $8.75 on Nov. 1, and $9 in May, 2012.