
THE CUPE CONNECTION

Official Publication of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 38
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City has difficulty with respect

When employees start with the City of Calgary they are given an orientation on the Corporate Values. For some long-term employees, they have seen the City role out many versions of value based statements starting with the City's Basic Values in the 80's and ending with today's Corporate Values. As we all know, HEART is the acronym the City chose to reflect these values.

H is to be **Honest** and tell the truth;

E is to pursue **Excellence**;

A is to be **Accountable**;

R is to be **Responsive**, compassionate & fair;

T is to **Treat** others with respect.

For HEART to have meaning the City of Calgary needs to make it a way of doing business, not just a flashy acronym rolled out for citizens and potential employees. In short, the City needs to walk the talk, currently they are not.

Why is the City not walking the talk? Frankly there are many reasons, but let's look at a few examples of how they continue to fall woefully short of this goal.

Assessment—during Council's budget deliberations in November, our Board of Directors (City Council), instructed Assessment to come up with \$500 thousand in budget savings. How did Assessment choose to come up with these savings? They targeted 4 senior employees all of whom had close to 30 years service with the City. These District Assessors were the highest paid unionized employees in Assessment, and represented the greatest savings outside of management. Without regard to the

fact that these employees had mentored many of their junior co-workers, the City identified these employees as a target for their cost reductions.

When Local 38 inquired as to where the work was going and was it going to be re-distributed, we were informed by the Assessment Department that the work remains and is thought to be growing not being reduced. How then can the City say that these individuals were not targeted unjustly when their work is going to be performed by others? How is the City going to save any money if they are required by the collective agreement to pay relief pay for people acting at this level? How is the City going to comply with the collective agreement and allow these employees to return if there are positions at this level? The simple answer is the City has no intention of complying with the collective agreement, its values or respect in the workplace. This is why Local 38 has been required to file numerous grievances regarding this matter. It is only through the grievance process the City will comply with any of its policies or with the collective agreement.



Many of us gathered in the Atrium of City Hall a few months back to listen to the Mayor inform us that it was his desire to cut through the red tape and become a customer focused organization. The Mayor went on to tell us that we had permission to go the extra mile to solve citizens' complaints quickly and efficiently.

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So what has transpired to show that this is in fact the new way of doing business at the City of Calgary? The first reference point is how the Mayor and Council have handled the situation with ENMAX and its Board of Directors and CEO. Clearly feeding the media circus is far more important than a thoughtful respectful approach with the affected individuals and parties.

The permission the Mayor talked about doesn't mean much because in Assessment, an Assessor was disciplined for confirming a list of numbers on a document previously provided by that same customer. The City in this case accused the Assessor of breach of confidentiality because the customer had since sold the property. There was no allowance for the fact that it was a passing glimpse and that in fact the customer had complete knowledge as he was the one who prepared the document.

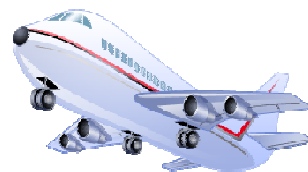
How is the City respecting the time of its customers? How is the City respecting its employees? Simply—they are not.

Finally, a member within Local 38's jurisdiction approached the City regarding gross violations of the respectful workplace policy and the City did nothing. To further demonstrate the City's indecision, the employee and their spouse met with the Manager and indicated they had evidence to support their allegations of violations of the respectful workplace policy. Did the Manager ask to review the evidence? No. Did the Manager ask that the evidence be turned over to Human Resources or Corporate Security in order that it could be evaluated? No. This left the member with no choice but to go to the City Police who laid charges. The only way the member was able to get the City to address the matter was to contact Local 38 to advocate on their behalf and file related grievances.

The City of Calgary has a long way to go with regard to respecting us as employees. It also has a long way to go in respecting us as citizens. It is, however, clear that unless we are vigilant and ensure that we and our co-workers are respected at work, this will not happen.

Please keep the City moving forward and hold your supervisor and others accountable.

So Much for Flying the Friendly Skies



Recent media stories have highlighted our new mayor's attempt to "save taxpayers' dollars" by accepting free trips from private businesses. Local 38 members are held to a high standard when it comes to conflict of interest, which includes any "perceived" conflict of interest. Members responsible for procurement have strict standards, city inspectors are held to a high standard. Police cannot accept even a free coffee from Tim Horton's, all to ensure there is no perception of conflict or bias. Perhaps the next time members are disciplined for a perceived conflict of interest, we can point to the Mayor's example as a way of saving taxpayers' dollars.

Rules are put in place to bring clarity to situations. But it is becoming quite clear that there are rules in place for city employees that do not apply to the mayor and aldermen. However, basic common sense should prevail. A high-profile mayor should have the wherewithal to understand that taking free trips from private companies that bring forward projects to the City for approval damages the credibility of the city. The response of saving taxpayers' dollars is a poor excuse for ignoring good governance.

We have recently watched the Enmax drama play out as Mayor Nenshi stepped in to publicly chastise Gary Holden for accepting free trips. Although there are some differences regarding these two issues, Nenshi cannot escape the fact that a perceived conflict is as damaging as an actual conflict. Nenshi would be well advised to take his own advice that, if you don't want to end up on the front page of the newspaper, then don't do it.

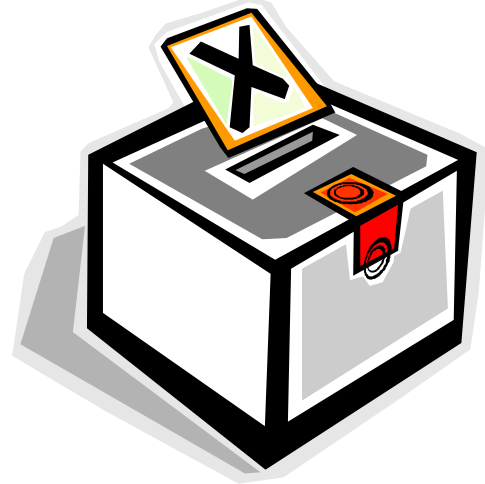
Advance Notice of CUPE Local 38 Elections

At the Regular General Meeting April 26th the following positions will be open for a two (2) year term:

- 1) Business Agent
- 2) Vice-President
- 3) Secretary
- 4) Five (5) Executive Members-At-Large

To be eligible for nominations for any of the offices, members must have attended at least 50% of the Regular General Meetings in twelve (12) months immediately prior to the election. The member must be present at the April meeting, or indicate in writing to the Secretary a willingness to stand for nomination.

In accordance with the bylaw amendments approved by the CUPE National last summer, in order to be eligible for the office of Business Agent, Vice-President and Secretary, a member shall declare their intention to run at the March Regular Meeting. This declaration can be made verbally at the March meeting or by submitting a written declaration witnessed by another member which is to be read at the March meeting.



Retirement Banquet & Dance FOR OUR RETIREES IN 2010

on
Saturday, May 28th, 2011
6:00 PM - 12:30 AM
at the
Calgary Winter Club
4611 - 14 Street NW

Mark your calendar
Tickets Available Soon!

REGULAR MEETING



Tuesday, FEBRUARY 22, 2011

7:00 p.m.

Union Office

1439—9th Avenue South East

BUSINESS: Regular

- 1. Twenty-five (25) eligible delegates to AFL Convention—
Calgary—April 28—May 1/11.**
- 2. Two (2) eligible delegates to CLC Convention—Vancouver-
May 9-13/11.**