

**BC GENERAL EMPLOYEES' UNION
COMPONENT 6 EXECUTIVE MEETING
SOCIAL, INFORMATION & HEALTH COMPONENT**

December 7 - 9, 2021

File No. 1006-002

Attendance: Judy Fox-McGuire – Component 6 Vice President and Local 610 Chair (PSSG Probation)
Judi Porter – Local 601 Local Chairperson (Min of Citizens Services)
Veronica Barlee – Local 601 1st Vice Chairperson (MAH) (AG - Min Housing)
Desiree Cabecinha - Local 601 Treasurer (CLBC)
Jeremy Leveque – Local 601 (MCFD)
Daryl Marceau – Local 602 Chairperson (MCFD)
Stephen Anderson – Local 603 1st Vice Chairperson (PSSG Probation)
Kayla Woodruff – Local 603 Young Worker (MCFD)
Lisa McDonald – Local 603 Member at Large (SDPR)
Harbinder Gill – Local 604 Chairperson (SDPR Youth PWD)
Andrea Mitchell – Local 604 1st Vice Chairperson (PSSG Probation)
Cynthia Mephram-Egli – Local 605 Chairperson (AG Family Justice)
Alex Miller – Local 606 (MCFD Youth Probation)
Mona Dykes – Local 607 Acting Chairperson (SDPR)
Karen Kenney – Local 608 Chairperson (SDPR)
Anna Depretto – Local 609 Chairperson (CLBC)
Teri Goodrick – Local 612 Chairperson
Mike Eso – Regional Coordinator & staff assigned to Component 6

Regrets: Darryl Flasch – Local 603 Chairperson (MCFD)
Terra Plut – Local 607 Chairperson (MCFD)
Deb Burns – Local 611 Chairperson (MCFD)

Tuesday, December 7, 2021

Acknowledgement of First Nations Territory – given by Desiree Cabecinha

1. **Call to Order** by Judy Fox-McGuire
2. **Review and adoption of agenda as amended.** **M/S/C**
3. **Review of previous meeting minutes:** **M/S/C**
Article 29 AG – needs to reflect verbal report; A/LC – Steve Anderson 603; change Daryl Marceau to reflect MCFD, not SDPR.
4. **Business Arising from Minutes:**
 - Investment report will be reported out quarterly in 2022 through Finance Committee.
 - Reminder that headphones can be purchased (up to \$100) and reimbursed through component.
5. **New Business:** None
6. **Local Reports:**

Local 601 – Judi Porter:

One meeting since September:

- Local Executive meeting: Discussed RTO, duty to accommodate, reschedule of cancelled stewards meeting.

Local Statistics:

	Members	Grievances	Stewards	OSH Reps
September 15, 2020	2959	62	64	47
March 1, 2021		50 16 Employer Filed	57	142
June 15, 2021	3058	35 - in total 19 - Employer Filed 6 – 1.10 or 1.9	74	61
Sept 27, 2021	3156	48 total 20 Employer Filed 12 – 1.9, 1.7 or 1.10	62	153
Dec 3, 2021	3103	42 total 24 – Employer filed 8 – 1.7, 1.9 or 1.10	74	53

Good and Welfare: None

Local 602 – Darryl Marceau:

Grievances and Appendix 4s: 602 has a few members placed off on unpaid leave due to the Public Service Vaccine Mandate. No grievances have been filed to this point but are likely coming. Some offices have older Appendix 4s that they are wanting brought forward again or are beginning the process for a new one.

OHS: Concerns from members regarding shared offices and some hesitancy about returning to work full time as that means sharing an office and not upholding the 6 feet apart guidelines. I let the members know that these concerns were forwarded to OHS specialist Brandon Thistle. I also let members know that the union is watching PSA and PHO orders and there are no restrictions in regard to sharing offices and physical distancing between staff. Restrictions appear to be lifting with the eventual return to the office. I let the members know that I will keep them updated if anything changes.

Local staff rep reports that they have had a flood of inquiries about the vaccine mandate.

MCFD: Similar to my last report, many offices continue to be busy and lots of hiring continues. Some workers continue to be anxious with the return to full time work and many have signed up for telework

agreements allowing them to work from home one day per week. Workload for many offices also continues to be a concern.

MSDPR: Still waiting on a classification update. No other updates.

CLBC: Employer appears to be looking at imposing a vaccine mandate for their staff as well. Like MCFD, MSDPR, IT etc. I have asked my local union admin staff to compile a list of offices with existing and new stewards as well as offices where stewards are needed. I worry that many stewards are not returning. Follow up for these offices and recruiting stewards will begin in early 2022.

IT: Some NTT workers have issues with being on a standby list constantly. Plus the employer's high expectation of availability and response within 30 minutes while the employee is on their off time. A grievance has been filed. I believe that a policy grievance is already at HQ that is scheduled to proceed in 2022. This grievance will be partly determined by the outcome of the policy grievance.

PSSG: Some concern regarding masks and other health and safety issues. Currently in some offices workers are no longer masked or observing social distancing practices which some members are struggling with while others don't appear to have an issue.

CCC: Not many updates as the last meeting was cancelled. A few cities/towns in the local are having family skating parties. CCC to be donating to some food banks in the area. Steward Appreciation - plan for a dinner in the spring. Further ideas for training for members to be explored at the next meeting.

GOOD and WELFARE: Flowers sent on behalf of the union for two members whose parents passed away.

Local Executive Update: Nothing new to report. Plan to have an executive meeting and a general meeting to hold local executive elections early next year.

Local 603 – Stephen Anderson, Acting Local Chair presented by Kayla Woodruff:

Closing and merging of offices in PSSG (Van East, Van South, moving Van West); not filling positions via attrition (Low caseloads).

SDPR – “Silent monitoring” being used to audit the work being done and is targeted at pockets where complaint patterns have arisen; this is done without the employer informing staff/clients; FOIPPA concerns; Master Agreement language is outdated doesn’t reflect how our work is done now; likely to be raised at Article 29 and presented at Bargaining.

Local 604 – Harbinder Gill:

Verbal report provided

Probation – Andrea:

- Dynamic Operating Model (DMO) – paper to be released to the field Dec.8th; structured/fixed/hybrid WFH options available for each office depending on office need and individual preference; issue arisen about laptops vs tinies – those with laptops will be able to continue moving them back and forth, but those with desktop tinies will not be able to and will have to use their own personal computer if they want the WFH option. Will address at A29;

- Vacancies – resistance to filling them due to low caseload numbers; not grieving at this point (risk FTE's being absorbed through attrition or moved to different offices); regional resistance continues separating workload from caseload
- Vaccine mandate – at least one staff has elected not to be vaccinated at this time; taking leave entitlements at this time;
- Flooding evacuations – at least one staff impacted; initially instructed to take special leave and then A/L; still waiting to hear if she was placed on paid administrative leave after I raised this with the union (as was done in the summer for wildfire evacuees).

Local 605 – Cynthia Mephram-Egli:

There are 10 grievances, 4 are employer filed, 6 have been filed by members.

We have no Appendix 4s.

360 members in 605; 47 of those members have no email address on file and 43 have not completed a membership application.

Yes, they are paying dues, but they did not complete a membership application. They simply have not completed and/or submitted their membership application.

Cross Component - we have had no meetings recently.

Steward elections - Closing for steward nominations was November 30th. Moving forward to Local Elections next year, our Area Office has put a call out to all Components asking for 2 members to be suggested by the Local Chairs for balloting committees, so they are getting organized :) The Balloting Committee Training is happening Wednesday, December 15. For 605, and 2 of my members will be attending.

The Chair + 1 training was on Oct. 28 and we had OHS training Nov. 23, 24 and 25. Area 05 has a steward course next week and we will be having training in the new year, but we have no confirmed dates yet for that.

Vaccine Mandate - I've been responding to all members who call... and referring them to a our Staff Rep to support these members if needed.

I've had reports from a member of Workload issues at their workplace? I will be looking into this further.

No Good and Welfare.

Local 606 – Alex Miller: No report provided

Local 607 – Mona Dykes:

Grievances

Total of 12 active grievances (3 of which are now being handled by the Advocacy dept)

4 of these are employer-filed (overpayment grievances)

3 are general interpretation issues

4 are loss of income grievances (discipline, STIIP denial)

1 is union-filed regarding MCFD denying employee's right to be compensated for OT in time off.

Appendix 4's

7 active Appendix 4 complaints.

OHS: no OHS concerns at this time.

Member/Worksite issues:

Regarding vaccine mandate, information coming to light that some members of component 12 and 6 may be seeking legal recourse to file a complaint. Protest signs in Penticton saying government workers are have their rights taken away.

MCFD offices are short staffed placing a burden on remaining staff increased caseloads. Support staff is also short staffed. No office managers for Oliver and the 3 offices in Penticton. Cathy Segries had said she put in a article 12 grievance.

Probation workload issue in the Vernon office.

CLBC no concerns that have been brought to my attention. I have spoken with a couple of workers from the Penticton office and they state everything is ok at this time.

SDPR is providing overtime because of the backlog of work. they say it is because of vacation and flex days, SDPR has continually been backlogged. Even before theses crises. There is a shortage of staff that is causing the backlog of work.

Good and Welfare: from the fires a member lost her home in the fires.

2 EAWs from the Penticton office I retired the other member took the leave

Local 608 – Karen Kenney:

Grievances and Appendix 4's: None

Member/Worksite issues:

SDPR: Vaccine mandate meetings took place by mid Nov.

MCFD: Assisting Dawson's Creek member with a Step 1 grievance regarding 1-day unpaid suspension and letter of discipline as a result of a breach to the PSA Code of Conduct. Met with employer on December 6, 2021.

Activism Highlights:

- November meeting was cancelled
- Activist Appreciation Banquet: currently on hold.
- CCC: Two events have been planned for members in the new year – an in-person Yoga Class and a virtual Painting Class.
- Steward Nominations: Nominations have been forwarded to the local office. Concern about the number of people returning to the role, only 1 new steward has volunteered their time. Will need to continue to recruit.
- Chair Plus 1 took place on November 3, 2021. Focused on conversations with management.
- 608 Local Executive Meeting held October 18, 2021 at 5:00pm.

- Balloting Committee Training – Dec 15, 2021

Other: Next CCC Zoom meeting scheduled for Tuesday, December 14, 2021.

Local 609 – Anna Depretto:

Grievances & Appendix 4's: 14 grievances filed (MCFD, SDPR). Issues: loss of income, interpretation, employer filed)

OHS:

- CLBC office noted an increase in transient/homeless population hanging out around building. Have requested increased lighting and additional alarm in office.

Member/Worksite issues:

- Members have been put on unpaid leave as result of vaccine mandate.
- Loss of stewards has been another result of vaccine mandate. Stewards have resigned due to feeling a lack of union support around vaccine mandate/supporting members to maintain employment.

Activism Highlights:

- Children's Christmas party (gift drop off) - December 4/5
- Virtual activist appreciation Christmas dinner – December 17
- Chair + 1 – Facing Difficult Management – November 4
- Monthly CCC meetings with discussion around how to increase membership in the new year (virtual M2M's).

Local 610 – Judy Fox-McGuire: Refer to VP Report

Local 611 – Deb Burns: No report

Local 612 – Teri Goodrick:

Chair plus one meeting was scheduled for October 21, 2021 in hybrid zoom/in-person format but had to be rescheduled. New meeting date is Dec 14, 2021 and will be virtual only.

Steward elections were quite successful with a good number of both new stewards and returning stewards from across the northwest.

Enhanced steward training was held November 2, 2021 in Terrace (with hybrid zoom option). Topic was steward fundamentals review/intro for new stewards. The training was very well attended both in person and virtually, with a good mix of returning stewards and brand new stewards. Recruitment for other positions and opportunities was also discussed and there was quite a bit of interest. A couple of people may be interested in nomination for local executive committee as young worker. Plan to hold "check-in" meetings for stewards to connect and discuss issues/questions and ensure newer stewards are supported as they get comfortable in their roles.

Local Executive meeting scheduled for November 1, 2021 was canceled and will be rescheduled in the new year.

No updates from Cross Component Committee.

One active grievance regarding a written warning. Three employer-filed grievances regarding overpayments.

Lots of inquiries from members about vaccine mandate being enforced - have been sharing the video link to the webinar that BCGEU held to answer questions about this.

Not aware of any updates on the active Appendix 4 workload reports with both Smithers and Hazelton MCFD Child Safety teams which are awaiting decision by Article 29 Committee.

OHS: Not aware of any outstanding OHS issues. Regular meetings and inspections as well as Covid-specific reports and inspections being completed as required.

Local General Meeting scheduled for Feb 4, 2022 to address Local Executive elections. Two members have been appointed to the balloting committee. Local Executive elections will be held in the new year.

7. VP Report – Judy Fox-McGuire: Verbal report

Reminder to use your Chair Days to do local work like updating steward lists and M2M even when we can't get into offices. Members have been divided over the vaccination requirements, but it has been announced that about 97-98% of the Public Service has been vaccinated and I think we can conclude that it is the minority who are against it. Some members are concerned about having to provide the employer with proof of vaccination and losing their jobs if they do not want to comply and some are concerned about being required to work with people who do not become vaccinated. The PSA is still dealing with a backlog of 400 requests for exemptions. In the public service, the members are required to show their vaccine proof on virtual screen and it is not being cross referenced. However, the FAQ's clearly warn that forged vaccine certificates will be a standards of conduct violation and we have had reports that some people have forged certificates.

The Union advocated strongly for the postponement of the return to the office and it has now been pushed off again. We continue to meet weekly with MCFD for covid related issues but everything else should always start with the local OHS committees and go from there.

The JOHS committee continues to meet regularly and this is where we discuss issues across ministries that have not been resolved at the article 29 HS committees. Thanks to the work started by Harbinder and Lisa at the Article 29 committee, messaging about video recording at office should be going out. This has been a long time coming. We have also been dealing with aerosolization questions a lot and will continue to press on that.

CLBC is now mandating vaccinations and following the Health authorities lead in cross referencing the vaccination with the members personal health number.

Component bargaining is set for January 10-14. Kim Shelley will be attending our meeting on December 8 and we will be reviewing our bargaining proposals and reviewing the current grievances.

The Steward numbers have been reported as going down in the last round of elections. I would encourage everyone to take a chair day and call past Stewards to see if they will consider signing up again. It has been really difficult to speak to people without worksite visits and I think that is reflected in the numbers. However, in anticipation of bargaining, it is essential that we reach out to members to communicate to them.

Also, local elections will be opening in the new year. The local chair sets the dates for the elections and other information can be found by consulting the elections guide.

The union recently announced an increase to our pensions. A communication went out a couple of weeks ago but I want to highlight the significance of this announcement. Thanks to Harbinder for inviting Paul Finch to our meeting today to explain the changes.

8. **Motion** put forward by Cynthia Egli – 8000 masks for Component 6 members at an estimated cost of \$40K plus shipping. Deferred – will be reviewed by Finance Committee before being brought forward for discussion and vote.

9. **Committee Meetings** – Community and Social Action, Education and Finance

10. **Presentation on Pension Update and Component Investment Update – Paul Finch BCGEU Treasurer**

Quarterly investment reports to be provided. Walk through of how to read the report and caution against looking at short-term gains and losses; conservative 50/50 bond/equities mix; shows comparisons to S&P/TSX both with and without energy and utility stocks (131 active funds), and comparative bond funds (93).

PSPP: Under previous plan 2 iterations ago lower income earners (typically under 80K salary) were over contributing and under benefitting under previous plan; and the early retirement provisions again relied on those who couldn't retire early to subsidize those who could afford to retire early – again benefitting those higher income earners; 3 years ago it was negotiated to move to flat rate of accrual; those 12 years of retro bump to the below CPP contributions from 1.65 to 1.85; current recent agreement looked at 3-year valuation cycle which showed a significant surplus that was unallocated; PSEC agreed to move flat rate of accrual of half the surplus would go to secure future funds against market losses, and the other half would be used to increase flat rate of accrual to 1.95% with no concessions and no reduction in employer contributions/no increase in employee contribution.

Reminder that defence fund including bargaining advertising dollars are being paid for out of investment returns, not from dues. Dues fund direct service to members.

Wednesday, December 8, 2021

Land acknowledgement and call to order – Judy Fox-McGuire

11. **Appendix 4 training – Sonja Haigh (MCFD Article 29)**



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Hours of work agreements – negotiated at the local work unit level. Local chairs are always involved to be sure the language is appropriate and doesn't contravene the main/component agreements and signs off. HOW works hand in hand with 'no free overtime'.

Overtime – staff are contracted for a 35-hour work week and the employer relies on overtime to complete the work. No motivation on employer part to staff appropriately when staff solve the problem for them, especially when it's free.

12.2 Positions temporarily vacant – this grievance can sometimes be paired with an Appendix 4 complaint; they are separate processes; grievance takes time, so doesn't immediately solve the problem; also the employer often has answers for why these positions are vacant

Appendix 4 – can be individual or a group. Not necessary to get all team staff to sign the App 4, but the more, the better. E.g. Bail supervisors and work that cannot be completed by them sometimes gets shuffled to probation officers – this becomes a work flow issue; so the App 4 should be done as a work unit to protect against this; sword, not a shield; may impact voluntary training opportunities; will not impact HOW and threats of losing EDO; shouldn't impact acting opportunities.

12. Component 6 Grievance Report – Mike Eso

13. Bargaining – Mike Eso: Discussion of process/protocol

Thursday, December 9, 2021

14. CLC Harrison Winter School, January 2022 – Cynthia Egli, Chair of Education Committee

Four applications and looking for alternates from Component who have not gone in the last five years. Must be fully vaccinated. The following courses have room:

- Week 1 – Return to Work/Duty to Accommodate
- Week 2 – Unions in the Community, Workers Compensation Level 1 and Level 2
- Week 3 – Community Advocate Level 1, Arbitration Level 2 (must have Level 1)
- Week 4 – Federal Labour Law

15. Article 29 Reports:

AG/Family Justice – Cynthia Mephram-Egli: November meeting was cancelled by BCGEU staff without notice or consultation, despite efforts by Cynthia to keep that in place. Focus of meeting will be on education leaves and vacancies over 7mths; next meeting set for December 17th.

CLBC – Anna Depretto: Verbal report

SDPR - Lisa McDonald/Mona Dykes: Meeting cancelled; next meeting will include the following: Staff cannot keep ergo equipment for work from home w/o medical note; staff shortages in face-to-face offices – many off on training, ongoing issue.

MCFD – Sonja Haigh: Meeting cancelled.

PSSG – Judy Fox-McGuire: Cancelled; set for Dec.18th.

PSSG Subcommittee – Community Corrections - Judy Fox-McGuire/Andrea Mitchell: No meeting since last component meeting; next meeting set for December 14th.

Citizen's Services – Judi Porter:

Last full meeting October 21st. Have continued to have ongoing discussions with respect to Service BC

Offices, RTO and any other issues that came up.
Lots of discussion re: RTO and vaccine policy.
Discussion around “words matter” education for all staff.
Working alone policy provided for Service BC Offices.
Updating safety plans as more people return to the sites. Approx. 85 sites in total to update. Updated plans posted to MTIC Hub for staff.
Still issues with unmasked persons wishing to access SVBC services in some offices even after the update from the PHO about masks.
Performance Management reminder of “duty to enquire”.
Workload issues for Service BC offices as they are not quickly replacing staff. ADM says that hiring is happening but difficult to get responses in some remote areas.
Exit interviews – SHR advised that CITZ is not required to do exit interviews and are at the discretion of the divisions.

There are plans for a WES Survey in 2022 and are waiting for clarification from DMCPs
Will be having one member (12) leaving so need to contact Maria for substitute.

Municipal Affairs: No report

JERI: Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation: No report

AEST: Advanced Education Skills Training: No report

Guest Speaker – Pamela from Broken Promises Rescue

Vancouver Island animal rescue; established in 2011, all-species rescue; no government funding/subsidies; 100% volunteer-run; use of foster homes (no shelters); registered charity – no wages; all donations go to help the animals; provides good vet care prior to adoption; home visits for all adoptions; no age limit for animals or refusals due to medical reasons

16. Committee Reports:

Community and Social Action – Andrea (Chair):

- **Motion** to donate \$500 to Broken Promises Rescue (3rd Quarter 2021 donation) **M/S/C**
- **Motion** to donate \$500 to Red Cross BC Flood Relief (4th Quarter 2021 donation) **M/S/C**

Education Committee – Cynthia Egli (Chair)

- CLC Winter School applicants – four from Component 6. These applicants have been approved to attend – three attending Component-paid and one as Young Worker. Appears there was a breakdown in communication by CLC/Union in getting the word out to the Local Executives and the membership. Also, this will be a virtual event again this year and may have impacted desire to attend.
- Idea to pilot a Component-wide Steward town hall meeting via zoom where Stewards can put forward any questions prior to the meeting in an effort to support our smaller locals. Identified a need that stewards may feel isolated in the smaller locals, and recruitment and retention of Stewards is challenging. Now that virtual meetings are firmly established, it is an excellent way to bring communities together. Some question as to who would organize and lead these town

halls. This could be left to Local Chairs to band together if they wanted to engage in this kind of education opportunity and this could be supported by the Component. Larger locals also identified that they have issues with Steward recruitment, retention and engagement and may also benefit from this type of model. Education Committee flesh out the idea and will canvas the locals to see if there is a need or desire to participate in virtual Steward town halls.

Mike suggested that Locals have a Stewards Committee and regular steward meetings set for Q&A, discussion of current local/worksites issues and strategies for addressing them. Judy reminds Local Chairs to use Chair Days to reach out to Stewards to check in with them and establish that connection.

Time will be made at the next Component meeting for Education Report on their process and findings.

Motion to adopt report of Education Committee.

M/S/C

Finance Committee – Harbinder (Treasurer/Chair):

- November 30, 2021 report: \$568K in account plus \$500K in investment account; not spending as much as we have in pre-pandemic years. Recommendation to Component to refrain from investing more at this time. We are just coming into bargaining and having a large sum available could be advantageous. Investments can be increased on a quarterly basis.
- CLC Winter School: Four members approved to attend.
- Component 6 Masks – 8000 masks would cost \$36K plus shipping; there is money available.
- Annual honorariums will be distributed.

17. Unfinished Business:

Motion put forward by Cynthia Egli – 8000 masks for Component 6 members at an estimated cost of \$36K plus shipping.

Discussion: time frame for distribution to membership; question about quality of protection against air-borne variants; people have access to masks and some are ready to move forward w/o masks where possible; the Union was first to provide masks at the beginning of the pandemic and employers followed; perhaps other swag may land more positively.

M/S/D

Motion put forward by Veronica Barlee that Component spend \$2500 for seven CO2 monitors to be distributed to local area offices to bring onto worksites to measure air quality. This is a matter of Occupational Health and Safety.

Discussion: identified high quality model; need to see the efficacy of these units; concerns about distribution; thoughts that employer should be taking responsibility for air quality issues; Provincial OHS committee could have a role in engaging the employer in the discussion of testing air quality of worksites and remedying deficiencies.

M/S/D

Local Elections: January – local election nominations to open for 30 days. Election will only be

held for positions that have more than one person nominated. Reminder by Kayla Woodruff (current YW at Comp) to check in with their local young workers to see who may be interested to attend as the YW Component rep.

18. PE Committee Reports

Constitution and Structure Committee - Judi Porter

Bylaw changes proposed by component 4 (component delegation representation by population) being discussed and may impact other Components.

OHS – Cynthia Egli: no report

International Solidarity – Desiree Cabecinha:

Terms of reference reviewed; review of partnerships; discussion about 'charity' vs 'solidarity'. Reminder to table to bring issues forward that can be taken forward to Inter Sol committee

19. Good and Welfare: 1 – death of a family member of component executive and gift basket was sent on behalf of Component 6 Executive.

20. Next Meeting: Discussion of dates – March 22 – 24, 2021; location to be determined.