



## **PSAC Local 901**

### **SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING**

**11 July 2013, 5:30**

Chair: John Rose, TA from Geography

#### **Agenda:**

1. Bargaining Update: Unit 2
2. Election of VP Postdocs
3. Bargaining Update: Unit 1
4. Health and Safety Update
5. Open Discussion

#### **1. Bargaining Update: Unit 2**

Doulton Wiltshire, TA from Business, greeted everyone in her capacity as union President and invited everyone to the Grad Club after the meeting.

Abdi Ghaffari, PDF from Pathology, presented an update on behalf of the Unit 2 bargaining team. He said that the negotiations began in 2012. This is the first negotiation, but process has been slow. 35 articles altogether.

Impasse at last negotiation when economic package was presented. Gail Lam, our negotiator, has been fantastic.

Economic package: pay, benefits etc. The university has said it is not going to be not going to respond to proposal. Conciliation, conciliator picked, no time set, but will likely be September. If conciliation is not successful, then job action possible. Abdhi characterized the package as fair and balanced, and presented statistics from Canadian Association of Post-doctoral Fellows were then presented. He said that it was a bit of an insult that the employer was not even responding. As such, we don't know where they stand. Abdhi stressed the importance of child-care benefits. Postdocs want to have families.

Harish Chandler, PDF from Cancer Research Institute, spoke next. He is also on the bargaining team. He discussed his experience in the United States, where postdocs tend not to be unionized. He mentioned that the Queen's Postdoc society currently not active. He joined bargaining team in September 2012. The union and the employer have tentatively agreed on articles like the Joint Union-Management Committee, no strike/lockout provisions, and no discrimination provisions. Need intellectual property, right to publish. Go for a strike vote before conciliation to put strongest foot forward. Reaching people by phone: they are ready for strike vote.

## **2. Election of VP Postdoc Position**

MaryAnne Laurico, PSAC Staff, facilitated the election. She said that we had received one nomination so far, from Harish Chandler. She went over the rules for the election according to the Local's Bylaws and Bourinot's Rules of Order.

Michelle North, PDF from Anatomy and Cell Biology, nominates Harish Chandler. Abdi seconds.

MaryAnne called out for further nominations, but there were none.

Doulton raised a point of order and clarified that all members could vote in the VP Postdoc election, according to current bylaws.

The chair called the question on the acclamation of VP Postdoc. PASSES. Harish Chandler is acclaimed the new VP Postdoc.

## **3. Bargaining Update from Unit 1**

Updates were given from various members of the bargaining team for unit 1. First, Sean Field, TA from Geography, said that two full Saturdays and more spent on the bargaining platform. Not discussed any substantial proposals, and not signed off on any articles.

Stephen Sheps, TA from Sociology, discussed Article 3, Definitions and Responsibilities

Sean Field: Our proposal is based on member feedback. Employer's response could carve people out of unit and re-define some TFs as TAs

Stephen Sheps: Has happened in French. Drops to lower pay, despite same work.

Doulton took over and discussed training. We have feedback that members were getting jobs for which they did not have qualifications, in handling machines and such. Provisions for that in the CA would help management allocate us that makes use of our skills. Lots of contention over that issue. The employer claims that some departments could not handle that kind of thing.

Doulton emphasized that as with the Postdocs, Queen's can be aggressive with monetary issues. Already got no's from university, under guise of legislation, though we do see wage increases in public sector. In fact, with inflation, pay freeze is really a rollback.

Erin Clow, TA from Politics, discussed additional articles, including pregnancy and parental leave, intellectual property and academic freedom, and health and safety. She said that the union was proposing a brand new article regarding training. This would entail 10 hours of optional training for TAs, 5 extra for TFs. This has not received a response from the employer. Erin emphasized that it is important to say that there was no response on these issues because that might be a sign that those issues will prove contentious in September.

John Rose made suggestions on how to get involved through committees and mobilization. He asked members to bring forward issues that come up that might be difficult for you as a worker. He said that the executive will attend departmental orientations, and that they are looking for people to help out with those. These orientations are a great way to get to know the collective agreement. Stay tuned for news on a barbecue. There will also be Steward's Council meeting next week. He asked to get the word out to bring stories to the bargaining table to be more persuasive with the employer. Such stories could easily be kept anonymous.

#### **4. Health and Safety Update**

Dinah Jansen, TA from History discussed her role on the Joint Health and Safety Committees (JHSC) Arts and Science. Joint Health and Safety Committees meet monthly and conduct Regular inspections of departments. Queen's reticent to get fix things because of funds. Recently, there have been problems at Stirling Hall, which houses Physics, Astrophysics and Astronomy. JHSC recommended that the university assess structural integrity of the stairs. Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) sent in an email to committee members and said that only painting was necessary for the east stairs, and that the west stairs needed further assessment. The email had no timetable included. This email was late under the health and safety act. But Physical Plant Services (PPS) already had a local engineer, who recommended that the stairs be destroyed and replaced. PPS and EHS are not talking to each other.

Dinah reported how she had a meeting with an agent from the Ontario Ministry of Labour, representatives from the employer, managers from the departments, Queen's fire safety officer, Kingston fire people, and other members from the JHSC. The agent from the ministry issued an official order to Queen's to shut down the west staircase and repair it. There is now a need to asses whether to shut down half the building while stairs are being fixed, because it could now be a fire code violation with the west entrance closed. This will be done by an engineer hired by Queen's.

## 5. Open Discussion

Leah Sarson, TA from Politics: The engineer that school will bring on: how will he or she be selected?

Dinah: Not sure, exactly. He or she will be contracted.

Leah: Will there be transparency with that decision?

Dinah: Yes, I know, but not at liberty to disclose.

Seeing no further comments, the Chair called the question on adjourning, which passed.

### Members in attendance

	Name	Department	TA/TF/PDF
1	Erin Clow	Politics	TA
2	Doulton Wiltshire	Business	TA
3	John Rose	Geography	TA
4	Sean Field	Geography	TA
5	Stephen Sheps	Sociology	TA
6	Dinah Jansen	History	TA
7	Matthew Scribner	English	TA
8	Leah Sarson	Politics	TA
9	Alexandre-David Uraz	Physics	TA
10	Harish Chandler	Cancer Research	PDF
11	Michelle North	Anatomy and Cell Biology	PDF
12	Abdi Ghaffari	Pathology	PDF
13	Alison Fraser	Art History	TA
14	Doug Nesbitt	History	TA
15	Garcia Heverly-Coulson	Chemistry	PDF
16	Tamara Jamaspishuili	Pathology	PDF
17	Ethan Jenkins	Physics	TA
18	Ming Zhu	Chemistry	TA
19	Silja Freinag	Anatomy and Cell Biology	PDF
20	Meinappan Nagappan	Computing	PDF
21	Stephen Smith	History	TA
22	Travis Skippan	Mechanical Engineering	TA
23	Chris Cochrane	Mechanical Engineering	TA
24	Praphulla	Chemical Engineering	TA

Guests

MaryAnne Laurico

Tim McIntyre

Meagan Crane

Anne-Marie Grondin

PSAC Staff

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