

## **Telephone Town Hall – EMCON AUPE Members**

August 25, 2021

Moderator: Vice-President Mike Dempsey

Panelists: Negotiator Jason Rattray, Organizer Darcy Thiessen, MSO Danielle Kiesman, EMCON member Jason McLeod

*This transcript has been lightly edited for clarity.*

**MIKE DEMPSEY:** Let's start with a report from Negotiator Jason Rattray on where we're at in bargaining.

**JASON RATTRAY:** Well, where are we at in bargaining? We are at a difficult juncture. We're trying to get disclosure from the employer on their financial situation. We've made our way through the majority of non-monetary items. We've made some significant improvements in those items. Everything was derailed, I guess for lack of a better term, once we hit the monetary. We were having a lot of difficulty getting a decent increase for members at EMCON, you know to the point where they're not even willing to match the compensation and benefit rates for some of the employees of EMCON out of B.C. and Ontario.

So as a matter of process they are required to provide us with some financial disclosure. Frank has proven to be a little obstinate in this way and in that he's unwilling to do it. He's wanting absolutely absurd fines levied on us should something leak. I think the last ask was five hundred thousand dollars if any information were to leak from his from the financial disclosure that they provide to us which is absolutely absurd. Covid slowed everything down, but you know we're getting to the point where we should get this disclosure in the next month and hopefully get back to the table

**MIKE DEMPSEY:** Okay Jason thank you for that, and you'll be certainly hearing more from Jason as we go through some of our questions later tonight. Just a reminder for everyone on the line to press star 3 on your phone now to ask the negotiating team your questions. In addition to hearing questions directly from you we also have two poll questions to ask you. Let's do a quick poll now. I'm going to ask a question and then read out four answers and you choose the one that most reflects your opinion by pressing the number on your phone keypad that goes with your answer. Please listen to all the answers before you make your selection. Okay so this is question number one.

Our poll question is: do you agree or disagree that your negotiating team should focus on winning competitive wages and increased job security in this round of bargaining? Press one if you agree, press two if you disagree, press three if you're undecided, press four if you'd rather not say.

Thank you to everyone who answered this poll question. We will leave it open for another couple of minutes to give you more time to answer if you haven't already and I will share the results with you all

shortly afterwards. Now let's get to our first caller of the night and on the line, I see we have Betty. Betty is live and she's going to read a question and this question I'm going to refer to Jason Rattray Betty you can go ahead and ask your question.

**BETTY:** Okay Jason. My first year was EMCON well would have been years ago, but I have 30 years experience, I have no GDL, I have no bad driving record, I drive 400 kilometers a day, I'm from the Lac La Biche area. In the meantime, I'm a first year making 1640. I have people that I know work EMCON that have gdl's, no experience, no certification, all kind of stuff, making more money than me. That's ridiculous. Why am I not placed instead of labourer as operator one like the rest of the union? I'm a senior laborer for every other union except this one and I've been an AUPE member for over 25 years. I worked forestry before.

**JASON RATTRAY:** So, thank you for the question. I'm not quite sure how to answer it because I don't know the specifics of your situation but if you haven't yet you should contact your MSO have a discussion with them and find out why you're being treated differently why you're not considered you know you haven't been able to change classifications in all that time so you know without more information it's difficult for me to respond to that question but please contact your MSO and see if there's something that they can do to make that inquiry for you.

**MIKE DEMPSEY:** Thanks Jason. All right now we're going to get to another live question. This one is from Dave. Okay Dave you're live and this question also goes to Jason Rattray.

**DAVE:** Yeah, oh this is Dave. I'm considered a part-time guy, but I've worked all winter and all summer I just wanted to know if the guys that are working all winter and all summer should be full time.

**JASON RATTRAY:** Thanks for the question. We are trying to tackle the issue of the, I guess, abuse of the seasonal classification. We are doing our best to create language that would have people either automatically converted once they're they work for a certain period of time or that a competition be open and applications made. We are trying to work for this issue. Again the difficulty isn't that we're unwilling to try and make improvements it's that the employer is not willing to make improvements and has openly admitted that and in front of the bargaining committee that he doesn't want to pay for benefits. So the more people he keeps casual the more money he can save on benefits. So we are still working on that it's one of the reasons why this has dragged on. It's one of the issues that's very important and has come to us through multiple avenues in our survey and proposals process when we first gathered proposals. So it's being worked on keep in touch and stand by for updates once we get back to the table.

**MIKE DEMPSEY:** Thanks for that Jason. Before we go to another question let's share the results from our poll. All right now we asked "do you agree or disagree that your negotiating team should focus on winning competitive wages and increase job security in this round of bargaining."

Well the results are pretty obvious here. 92 percent of you chose option one, you agree we should focus on competitive wages and increased job security at the bargaining table. Three percent shows option two, they disagree, three percent of you are unsure, and two percent preferred not to say. So that's an overwhelming majority of you have agreed that you need to focus on competitive wages and increase job security at the bargaining table.

Speaking of polls, let's ask our second and final poll question for this evening's town hall. Once again, I'm going to ask a question and then read out four answers. Please choose the answer that most reflects your opinion by pressing a number on your phone keypad that goes with your answer. Please listen to all possible answers before you make your selection.

Our poll question is: would you be willing to take job action, including a strike, to win competitive wages and increase job security? Press one if you would take job action. Press two if no you would not. Press three if you're undecided. Press 4 if you'd rather not say. Once again that question is: would you be willing to take job action including a strike to win competitive wages and increase job security? Press one if yes you would take job action. Press two if no you would not. Press three if you're undecided and press four if you'd rather not say. Thank you to everyone who answered this poll question. We'll leave it open for another couple of minutes to give you more time to answer if you haven't already and I will share the results with you shortly afterwards. All right time to get back to our questions. I have a live question here from Eugene. So Eugene if you want to go ahead and ask your question.

**EUGENE:** Yeah, hello there. My question is i've talked to a few of the people down in the Hinton area and Three Hills and Concert and whatever. Some of the guys' biggest concerns about these dealings with frank and how we're not making progress with what's on the table. Their big concern is if we're to step back look at the situation and maybe address new plans with frank like some of the guys were hoping for maybe possible better benefits. Look at their benefit packages, look at some maybe some better incentives throughout the business. And then some of their concerns also were what the one gentleman here had tonight was what about these seasonal guys. Like how can we progress with these seasonal guys? How can we help them want to keep coming back because really without the seasonal guys it puts a big burden on all of all the full-time guys. That's my question.

**MIKE DEMPSEY:** That is indeed an excellent question Eugene and I'm going to refer this to Jason Rattray. Before Jason replies I just want to remind everybody, all the participants, to press star 3 now because we want to hear from you. If you have a question, that's star three. Okay over to you Jason.

**JASON RATTRAY:** Hello thank you for the question, Eugene. Just so you're aware we are seeking improvements to benefits. We are seeking improvements for wages. We prioritize based on the survey results and the feedback we receive from the membership, so we are acting directly on behalf of the

members and the instructions given to us through the proposals process. You've got bargaining committee members, they're representing your interests and making decisions on your behalf, and you know taking a step back is and looking at the situation is always wise advice. The difficulty is all of those items that you listed off are considered monetary and the moment we got into monetary issues the whole tone at the table changed. Frank has offered a 0.92 percent increase. We reported that to the membership. We're still fighting over safety equipment and clothing and compensation for people that have to like for instance there's some classification, bridge crews are one, where they have to have two sets of boots. They purchase two sets of boots versus the one set of boots. Also, I guess the, sorry I've forgetting the classification, but also there's other classifications that have to buy two pairs as well including boots that protect against the spray pad. And so those are the kind of things we're trying to get for everybody and we're trying to get the employer to pay for any safety equipment that is required for the job. They've come back and you know they're willing to provide some coverage for full-time staff and part-time staff but then nothing for casual staff and you know your casual employees are the ones who are you know making the least money. They're in the most susceptible position. They've got no guarantee of work, they've got no guarantee of income, so we're trying to encourage this employer to be fair and reasonable with providing some of these benefits. And we haven't even gotten through the safety equipment and clothing piece, let alone get into, you know, looking at other monetary benefits. We'll continue to work on this stuff, right now we're just trying to get to the next step of this process, get the disclosure we're entitled to make an assessment as to the financial health of EMCON and make a decision whether or not what we're asking for is too much or if it's a reasonable ask. And you know Frank is fighting us tooth and nail and when we're talking about a private business and a for-profit business every penny he pays to employees comes out of his yacht payments or whatever it is he wants to purchase next. So it's not going to happen overnight we're still in for a at least I'd say a six-month haul if not longer.

**JASON MCLEOD:** Could I add something there Jason? Jason mcleod here. I just would like to say that you know some people have along the lines of what you had mentioned there Eugene. That if we would break apart from AUPE let's say and approach Frank from a group of us or as employees and try to deal with them on that level if that's something that you might have been hitting towards. That we're having such a hard time with such a big backing with AUPE you know I would almost say that it would be very difficult for us to negotiate ourselves directly with Frank to try to get even half of what we are trying to get now. So that's just another two cents worth that I had to put in on this and just for food for thought for anybody that is thinking along the lines. Because I did have other guys mention why don't we just break away and deal with Frank you know separately, and I just don't see where the logistics of that would work or benefit us as a whole going forward. So back to you Mike Dempsey.

**MIKE DEMPSEY:** Thank you very much Jason. Before we move on, and I'll be doing this after each question, I'd just like to remind our participants to press star three now in order to ask your question. Okay so that's star three, press it so that we can get your question that gets you in the queue. All right the next one I have down, and we heard a little bit about this before, this one was from Dallas and this is a live one. Jason you can go ahead.

**DALLAS:** Okay Mike Dempsey this one might be for you. It has to do with this: on the first negotiations we negotiated boots we had it in the collective agreement. I have collected a lot of slack on it. We didn't go to arbitration for them boots. I have had a lot of hassle we have never heard a straight up answer on why it wasn't why we didn't get our boots, like I mean it didn't get wrote in the contract I know that but there's also a clause in there anything missed in the contract will be taken. I know our first negotiator was willing to come back he has all the notes along some of the negotiating team. It never got fought for and I don't know why and what there's never been an answer for us. We always got told to wait we get a contract and we'll be a solid group and everything will be good but I mean I personally have caught so much flack over that and would like an answer from AUPE and possibly some boat spot for us but anyways that's my question.

**MIKE DEMPSEY:** Thanks for that question, Dallas, and actually and I'm going to take this one over to Jason Rattray to answer it.

**JASON RATTRAY:** Thanks, Dallas, for the question. There has been a challenge made to address this issue. Admittedly it was missed. Not sure how both parties missed it but we did. You know I'm the new negotiator and one of the things that I know we've done is make application to the board and that, you know, in order to try and force the employer to fulfill the obligation even though it may not have appeared in the collective agreement. We did have agreement for those boots so that application at the board is on hold and we're trying to obtain those boots in agreement from Frank to fulfill the obligation from his predecessor at Carillion. I'm hoping the fact that Frank is using the same lawyer now as Carillion used that we may be able to move forward. But that's only going to happen once we get back to the table. So I'm confident that we're going to be able to resolve the issue going forward for sure we're also going to try and get it addressed retroactively you know from the beginning of the current collective bargaining agreement. Dallas, I hope I answered your question. I'm sorry, but I don't have an explanation as to why that happened other than it was an oversight by both parties, and I don't have an explanation as to why.

**MIKE DEMPSEY:** Thanks very much and I have one from Brian, I believe, that needs to be read. He has sent a question in and he wants it to be read so we did say we would accept those ones and so I am going to read this question out here. And I think we've already touched on this and Jason Rattray can steer me correctly if we haven't so the question from Brian says:

"It sounds like Frank may just not want to give us more than a zero decimal nine eight two percent raise. What is the union going to do if Frank doesn't want to give us a raise?"

Now before Jason answers that I'm going to give my own little bit of an answer to it. And I just want to remind everybody here that when I when we see a question about what is the union going to do, well folks, we're all the union. Everybody is the union. And you saw that question that came up on a strike action or job action of some sort and that gives you a kind of an inclination of where sometimes we need to go in order to get the things that the employer just refuses to give us. Okay having said that little piece there over to you Jason.

**JASON RATTRAY:** Sure thank you. Thank you for the question. What will we do? Well right now we're trying to, like I said, get disclosure of some financial information. We'll get back to the table and see if we can get frank to move on some of the monetary pieces. If that doesn't succeed we go into potential voluntary mediation and try to resolve the issues through a mediator. There's also a more formal process where we could enter into a more formal mediation, perhaps even a mediation arbitration, and then in the end we may be coming to the membership and seeking whatever willingness there is out in the membership to take whatever form of job action we think is necessary to get the employer to move off of their monetary position. So it could be, you know, there's various types of job action. There's right now, we're doing a lot in the way of direct action in the workplace. We've got some training coming up for other members around direct action. Some of your bargaining committee members have already had the training. There's also you know informational pickets or rallies you know we've already engaged somewhat in some of the you know we've done phone banks Darcy feel free to jump in because I know that you played a pretty key role in this you know phone banks and text banks and trying to get the members to text frank or email frank and tell them to offer a decent contract for his employees go ahead j or go ahead Darcy

**DARCY THIESSEN:** Yeah, and I think the original question is like, what are we going to do if he doesn't? And I think the reality is frank probably doesn't want to give you the increase right? Just knows it's bad for him to say that he doesn't want to do it and he says what every employer says, that he can't afford it. And i've been at dozens of different tables and different unions across different sectors employers always say the same thing, they always say they can't afford to give you a raise and we've got the same response to all of those unions right because they always threaten that you get the raise you're going to get laid off yada yada every single time. Every single table that i've ever been at that's the line from employers, so we say show us the books then. Which is what we're doing. The reality is that frank has done everything he can to delay showing us the books. He has lawyers that tell him that we're entitled to that information, he knows that we're entitled to that information to see what he can and he can't afford. The fact that he's dragging us through the labor board first for that and then for the confidentiality agreement really just means that he doesn't want to show us what that he can't afford it. So the reality is he might not want to pay you that extra money so your bargaining committee is at the table advocating saying that you deserve this raise. And the reality is that their bargaining power comes from you. It's really easy to get rid of one worker or replace one worker it is near impossible to replace all 500 of you all at once and that's where your bargaining power comes from, is that legitimate threat that that is a real possibility. So what we need to do as a union is show frank that we're willing to do something like that and there's different things that we can do like Jason Rattray was saying. It can look like stuff like a petition, like a phone zap, like a picket like an information rally, but actions like that show your employer that you know your bargaining team isn't just full of hot air, they've got your backing behind them. And that bargaining power, that's that threat of like really actually impacting their operation by stopping the pickling of sand or stopping the plows from going out. That's a real threat. They need to take you seriously and if we're able to do that I think that they're going to take you more seriously and stop delaying at the board as well.

**MIKE DEMPSEY:** Thank you Darcy. Now before we get to our next question here I would like to read the results of our second and final poll question. Once again that question was: "Would you be willing to take job action including a strike to win competitive wages and increase job security?" A solid majority of you reported that yes, 73 percent of you would take job action. That was 73 would be willing to take job action and 13 were undecided, and the rest split between they would not and rather not say. So a vast majority of you, 73 percent, are in favor of taking job action if your demands are not met.

All right, now I'm going to move to our next live question. This one is from Jeffrey and I'm going to be directing this one to Jason Rattray again. Jeffrey you may go ahead and ask your question.

**JEFFREY:** I think it might have been better directed towards Jerry, but my question would be that Bill was on vacation and we didn't appear prepared to get to the bargaining when EMCON seemed to be willing to come to the table here. And I don't know whether Jerry or her who she's filling in for like are they depending on the lawyer's advice and everything else? And just what are that lawyer's qualifications to direct you like is he a bar member is he in good standing and why is it that we got that kind of direction to say hold off when it appears that we were ready to go?

**MIKE DEMPSEY:** Jason, he is referring to the labor board hearing that we just had, I think that's what he's referring to maybe.

**JASON MCLEOD:** Yes, sir if it was that, correct. So maybe I'm not going to answer it directly but I was at that labor board hearing and it just so happened that I, like you, figured that there was going to be a decision made by the labor board and as it was Bill Rigutto, our lawyer from AUPE, felt that it was in our better interest to put our submissions in writing and a little bit more in depth and it was granted to do so. Bill has till the 3rd of September to put everything in writing. EMCON's lawyer has until September 15th to review ours and rebut it and submit theirs. And then the labor board chair that's overseeing this is going to have it in his hand by the 20<sup>th</sup>, review it up until the 20<sup>th</sup> of September and he said that he'll make a final decision by the end of 10 days after the 20<sup>th</sup>, so by the end of September.

Now why exactly Bill chose to do that I don't have that direct answer, Jason Rattray may. I'm not sure if he talked to Bill on it myself I was a little bit taken back like why the heck did he not allow them to make the decision on the 23rd at that hearing, but after it was said and done it made a lot more sense to me to get our ducks in a row to line things up better and at the end of the day I think we'll be in a much better position and it will be pleading a much better case for us to the labor board. And we'll have a much better result in our favor now. That's partially my opinion but I it's more an opinion I think it's factual as well because Bill had a specific reason why he did that he didn't share it with all of us he may have touched based on it with someone else because like I said I was surprised as the rest of you that are hearing it but at the same time it sits okay with me. I'm glad that it went that way because we're going to be way more prepared than we would have been if we just bang let them make the decision on what they had in front of us. We're going to be able to polish it make it a lot better and make it come back around to us which will be way more beneficial to us as a unit in the long run. And what's another month guys?

You know another month compared to what's been happening... and everybody thinks that AUPE is doing all the stalling, believing the memos that Frank's putting out. It's not. Frank is doing the delaying. Frank is the one that's stopping us from going forward. Frank is the one that's stopping us getting back to the table and getting our collective agreement, getting our boots, getting whatever the hell we deserve and what we should get, he doesn't want to give us. He's delaying it as much as he can and he's trying to use AUPE as scapegoats and I'm not just saying that because I'm taking AUPE's side, because I'm with you guys. I'm not. We're all on the same team and I tell you from what I've been seeing I'm sitting at the table, I'm in some of these meetings and Frank is talking the talk but he's not walking the walk. So anyways back to you Mike unless you have something else to add Jason Rattray.

**JASON RATTRAY:** I'll just add to that. Very well spoken Jason McCleod, that was that was bang on. Bill Rigutto is one of our best union representatives working in the disputes and arbitration area. Very highly respected and very good at what he does. So if Bill on the fly decided that it was better to present a case in writing and make sure that all of our "I"s are dotted and "t"s are crossed and that we present the best case possible, that meant that he sensed that there was something the board might not hear if we went forward with oral arguments instead of something in writing. So let's put our faith in him, he's the expert in this area like Jason said and once we get back to the table we'll start pounding away.

**MIKE DEMPSEY:** Thanks Jason. Thanks to both Jason's for the very excellent answers you gave to that question. Next up I have a live question from Brenda. Would you like to ask your question? I think Brenda might have gone. Brenda are you still here?

Okay I don't hear Brenda. I'm going to read her question. Brenda has said and this is a quote here: "I talked to a lot of people honestly feel the union hasn't been there for us. What's going to change should we stay with this union or go to a different union?" I understand your frustrations Brenda, and especially when you're dealing with an employer who is totally intransigent, and we've certainly felt that across all sectors in the union. Darcy, would you like to take a crack?

**DARCY THIESSEN:** Yeah I can definitely do that. So you know I understand. I haven't been with this file for as long as you guys have existed but definitely since I've been here I've heard some concerns you know about communication and whatnot. And it is like it's frustrating when you're in bargaining with an employer like EMCON and Frank where they're constantly delaying and putting out this misinformation about the union. Delaying when we don't have the financials to be able to say there's a fair amount of money that you folks should be getting in terms of raises. You know nothing happens and people feel anxious about that and feel like decisions are getting made when without their input or without their knowledge. The reality is that you know a lot of times that there isn't a lot of things that are happening because of these delays and employers do this deliberately too, right, because they know it causes anxiety. And like I said before, your power comes from your ability to coordinate some sort of response to this to back up your bargaining team now, the legitimate threat that you could shut down EMCON's operation. And if you are questioning your union or your co-workers and whether or not they have their back your ability to show the employer that you're united is undermined and it undermines your



bargaining power. So this delaying tactic is absolutely a strategy with this employer and what I will say too is that, you know, you have people that are going to the board for you folks making sure that they get you this financial information so you know exactly what you can get from Frank.

If you were to go with another union a lot of times you're going to have to start over again in terms of bargaining with that delay. So at the end of the day I can't tell you what to do but there's some things just to kind of consider. Thanks Mike.

**MIKE DEMPSEY:** And thank you for that. Now before we go to our next question here I just want to preface it a bit.

We did the poll and 73 of you said you would be willing to take job action which would most likely turn into a strike. Having said that I have a question from or perhaps a statement from Doug. You are live go ahead with your question.

**DOUG:** Hi how are you doing. Hey listen I know you gentlemen with the union you're doing whatever you can. But what you can do right you know the only way we're going to get anything from Frank, which is he's a very smart businessman and he's going to play this out till the end of the contract runs out. So nobody's going to get nothing till then. The only way we're going to get anywhere with this gentleman is by striking. If you're going to figure it's pretty straightforward if nobody's out there doing the work do you think the government's going to put up with put up with it for like what couple weeks because nobody's out working. You know how much garbage is going to be in the ditches? How much pot holes not getting done, the bridge repair not getting back. He's going to have to go to the board asap and then on top of it when comes availability and he's got no drivers that's a thousand bucks a day for each truck sitting there. That's a fine for him. So you do the math on that that gentleman will be back at the table and he'll be kissing their asses.

So, the only way we're going to get anywhere is strike.

**MIKE DEMPSEY:** Yeah that's well put Doug, well put. I'm going to ask any of our other panelists here if they would like to comment on the course of action that would occur.

**JASON MCLEOD:** I'd like to make a comment. I've never been involved directly with a strike but it would take a whole bunch of organization. It would take a whole lot of input and participation from the members and I just want to touch base, we had our agms north south east and west and my AGM in the east, of 148 people, two people participated. So that's two people that could have came to a meeting just so we could put our executive in order. How many people Doug, and I'm not putting you down on this I'm just food for thought, how many people do you think are actually going to participate in a live strike and walk out of their work site when they wouldn't even participate in an AGM? Out of 148 people two people participated I was one of them so I don't know how you believe that would be organized. I'd be for it if we can but I think we're a little ways away from having the organization together and the participation from all the members to get the backing to go for it. With that, and I'm not discouraging it, but we need way more my point to this is we need way more participation from the

general membership overall. It's good that the people are participating tonight it's awesome but we need more participation from other areas as well. Back to you Mike unless Jason or hey Darcy Thiessen wants to take a crack at it go ahead Darcy.

**DARCY THIESSEN:** Sure, yeah, no, I like where your head's at there Doug. Because I think you're right you know you do have people working behind the scenes to make sure that this company is giving you everything that they can get through the legal systems that exist. But it's not illegal for your employer not to give you a raise, so the only way that's going to happen is you show that you're serious about insisting on one and that is going to have to look like Jason said more organization so we are having bi-weekly meetings and this goes back to the original question like what's going to change as well. We're having bi-weekly meetings with your bargaining committee, we're trying to establish worksite contacts to improve communication with the different work sites, but that serves like an organizational purpose too. So like fully expect that people are going to be reaching out to you asking to be sort of representatives or website contacts in your shops to convey information about bargaining to the rest of your shop or calls to action around different actions. And it doesn't necessarily need to look like a strike right off the hop right. It can be things like signing a petition and it can look like things like doing a phones zapps, it could like look like information pickets. And generally what we do is we work up to a strike. We try to make sure that people are serious about what they want and putting you know the actions where their mouth is and they're willing to back each other up and that's what we do. So fully expect that you know your bargaining team is probably going to be reaching out to you asking people to be works at contacts they might ask you to make a phone call and leave a message for decision maker and in order to get to a place where we could go on strike and show the employer that we're serious we need everybody to be participating in those things and saying yes to those requests.

**MIKE DEMPSEY:** Excellent. Oh we're we have about 10 minutes left we still probably have time to entertain more questions. I do have a couple of more, it's just a reminder to press star 3 if you want to get in queue for the questions and we'll see what we can do. Here my next one is from Dave and I'm going to put Danielle on notice that she'll probably be answering this one. Dave go ahead.

**DAVE:** There's a two week period in our pay period here. Sometimes workers leave early and other times workers are working overtime. According to the work period though if you leave early and then if you work overtime you don't get the overtime. I just want to know if you guys are looking into that or not.

**DANIELLE KIESMAN:** Thank you for the question Dave, this is Danielle. So as per article 16 it says if you work more than 44 hours per week or in excess of 10 hours per day then you would be paid the overtime. So it's all dependent on how early you leave that one day and how many hours you're working per week. So if you have a specific issue with this and you have a specific pay period you're looking at for sure give me a call and we can discuss this further. Back to you Mike.

**MIKE DEMPSEY:** Thanks very much Danielle, and I would just like to remind all of our EMCON folks calling in that many of you will have issues such as this and our member servicing officers this is their job to interpret your collective agreement and to help advocate for you in order to get that which you truly deserve, which the employer has agreed to in the contract. Remember these contracts are two-way deals and so what we have agreed to the employer has agreed to as well so always stick up for your rights. Now I have a question from Trisha, and Trisha if you would like to ask your question.

**TRISH:** hey guys my name is Trish. I work with the Hannah office I'm still fairly new this is only my second summer and I'm only I'm a summer laborer so I'm really not sure this is the first time I've ever been with a union. And I'm wondering like what I'm supposed to do? How am I supposed to help advocate for myself because David asked a question and you guys said, or he asked what's AUPE going to do for us, and you said well wait a sec we are all AUPE so in that case what is my role? Does that make sense?

**MIKE DEMPSEY:** Absolutely, and that's that question crosses many people's minds and it's a great road to get on. It's one I stepped on myself years ago. I'm not just a vice president I have 35 years of service before that directly to the government as an environmental protection officer and I got involved for the precise same reasons that you're outlining there. However I'm going to switch this over to Darcy to talk about a more personal answer to its question.

**DARCY THIESSEN:** Frankly you folks deserve a lot more than what you're getting right now. You do a lot of hard work and you deserve to be paid appropriately for that. There are a number of tools that exist for you so if you are having an issue I would insist that you would please call the 1-800 number if anything seems unfair or not right. Please call the 1-800 number, that's 1-800-232-7284, and ask to speak to your MSO. Because if there is something in your collective agreement we can follow grievance for you and try to get that corrected right away but we only have 15 days to file that grievance for you. So it's very important that you call as soon as you know, but if there's something that's not in your collective agreement right like you're not getting paid appropriately or like there's something else that is something that we can advocate for through collective bargaining if there's a proposal on the table we can fight for it.

But it does come back to that we need to participate as a whole and show frank that you're standing behind your bargaining committee and you're willing to take some action to interfere with his operation to get him to get him to pay attention to you folks. And even between bargaining I think some people mention something about advocating for themselves, well you can advocate for yourself but it's much more effective to do it as a group. And we are doing something called direct action more and more where in between bargaining what we can do is help support and organize sort of a coordinated effort to try to improve things on your work site before we actually get it in a provision in your collective agreement. And I would be sort of the person that would help you along with that or the organizer

that's been assigned and I'm happy to do that and if you call that 1-800 number I'll be very happy to talk to you about coming up with a plan to do that with your co-workers.

**JASON MCLEOD:** I'd like to also add there Trish, at any time you can get hold of your local your chair I know you don't have a sitting chair per se but you can get in touch with any of us that are involved in the bargaining team if you would like to get involved. You can also sign up for some training within the union so you could get more familiarized with what our part could possibly be and myself I'm a chair in the east but anybody can contact me and I'll try to direct them or mentor them as best I can or put you in the right direction. Any time or place my name's out there on bulletin boards and you know letterheads or whatever give me a shout at any time and we'll put yours in in the in the right direction.

**DARCY THIESSEN:** And if I could jump in with one last comment, some concrete actions that people can take right now is that we do need people that would be worksite contacts. People that can kind of let the bargaining team know what's going on the worksite but also like give information to their co-workers as worksite contacts. So if you are willing to do a worksite contact in your shop I really want to hear from you. I want to know that because I would like to include you on these bi-weekly meetings so you know what's going on and your people in your shop know what's going on at the bargaining table as well. And again give me a shout 1-800-232-7284.

**MIKE DEMPSEY:** Thank you Darcy and Jason mcleod. There have been so many great questions and conversation tonight, we have about five minutes left in the program so I would now like to ask our panelists to share a few words based on the conversations we've had tonight at this town hall. Let's start off with you Jason and the next person wants to share their thoughts can jump in right after him so pick whichever Jason happens to go first I'm going to say Jason Rattray.

**JASON RATTRAY:** Thanks Mike. I guess the one thing I would like to see, we need to make sure that our sights are set on frank and that we're not working in his interest by fighting amongst each other. I strongly urge if you're hearing people trying to cause divisions in the membership and talk about other unions those kind of actions work against us and show frank that we aren't as strong as we actually are. And so one of the things I recommend to the last caller there is if you hear of any of that just ask them why they would serve to undermine the bargaining committee and try and weaken us at a time when we're trying to get a contract for the membership.

I just think that that's a good advice is to just encourage people to keep their sights set on frank. He's the one that's causing the delays. He won't even follow the direction of the board by providing the disclosure we're entitled to. He's using lawyers and technicalities to delay further and further and further so just encourage people to make sure that they know that it's the employer that's causing the issues.

**DARCY THIESSEN:** Yeah it's been it's been great I don't think i've got much to add to what Jason had to say I think he summed it up very well

**JASON MCLEOD:** We need more solidarity okay. I'm not blowing smoke up AUPE's ass or nothing like that but you know there are tools okay, that's what we have in our corner. Everybody says what are they doing for us they're not doing nothing for us. That's not true. They're doing plenty for us. They have a lot of resources we're using them there's a whole lot more that we could have to use for our benefits. I can't stress how much more participation we need from our general membership you know whether it be call me call Mike Dempsey call Jason Rattray call your MSO whoever you know. I'm not the go-to guy but you could call me if you don't know if there's a rumour out there. People seem to be grabbing onto rumours and running with them and they taking this gospel you know. Verify this stuff. Figure out who it's coming from you know it's bad enough when things are uppity up and things are going let's say smoothly you know or the way they're going through the proper channels like our bargaining. You know AUPE is getting all the slack and the flack coming from a lot of our members okay and from Frank and I'm telling you it's not. So Frank is doing all the delaying AUPE is doing the best they can do we all wish we could all do better yes. Can I do better, of course. We all could but we're all on the same damn team. We're all striving for the same goal they have our best interests at heart and with more input from us then maybe a different light bubble come on and we could go in another direction but we got to get on the same team stay honest and keep focused and go with us. If everyone thinks there's a better option out there well I guess go take it but this is our option right now and it's a good tool that we have. And guess what we're not wasting our freaking money with our union dues because they got a lot of resources they're using them they're putting in our direction and they have been doing a lot and i've been seeing it hands on. Now if other people here would get more involved they would see the same thing that I'm seeing. So get involved get a little more training you know come to those bi-weekly meetings if you get an option to come there, it's open to anybody. If you want to come and see what's going on see what we're trying to achieve this this transpired from that. We got a Facebook page that wouldn't happen if it wasn't for AUPE and a whole lot of other stuff. And again I'm not blowing smoke up no one's ass it's just like it is what it is. So closing, thank you everybody for coming and you know just stay together and stop listening to all the horseshit that's being thrown around there. Thank you back to you Mike.

**MIKE DEMPSEY:** Well put as always. Thanks to everyone for your participation tonight. If you still have questions for AUPE remember you can reach us from the from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM at 1-800-232-7284. Our staff will direct your question to the right person at AUPE. Thanks and have a great evening!