

ALBERTA UNION OF PROVINCIAL EMPLOYEES

BARGAINING UPDATE

SEPTEMBER 2, 2021

SPECIAL AREAS BOARD

LOCAL: 118
CHAPTER: 020

ALL CERTIFIED STAFF

MEMBERS TO VOTE ON THE EMPLOYER'S UNFAIR "FINAL OFFER"

Over the past few months, it became clear the Employer does not believe in their "Final Offer" enough to exercise their right to initiate an official employer final offer vote. Your Bargaining Committee, Chapter Executive and Negotiator met numerous times over the past few months to talk next steps, and together we decided to do what the Employer won't. We're putting the "Final Offer" they tabled to a vote. The "Final Offer" vote will be held on September 14, 15, and if needed, the 16th, 2021.

A member of the Bargaining Committee, an AUPE staff member and a member of the Chapter Executive will travel to all worksites to capture as many member ballots as possible. A schedule will be sent out in the coming days of the expected and approximate times you will see the committee members at your site. They will answer all of your questions at that time. Strict Covid-19 protocols will be in place to ensure the health and safety of all members.

As a committee we do not recommend accepting this final offer, and here is why:

Historically, our negotiating team shared a relatively positive relationship with the Special Areas Board. But it was clear as soon as this round of bargaining began that this relationship had changed. Contrary to the update the Employer posted on May 14, 2021, the Employer suggested your bargaining committee make a written formal offer as discussed in our mediation meeting. Because of this, we decided to adjourn our complaint in good faith and trusted that the Employer was going to accept our new offer as we were led to believe.

In our offer we asked to restore \$150 of the \$200 increase to the Flexible Spending Account the Employer initially proposed to salary members, add a small increase to the allowance in lieu of Health Plan Benefits for wage employees (there was no other language benefiting wage employees in the offer), and a fourth year on the contract with a 0% salary increase.

Continues on Pg. 2



Alberta Union of Provincial Employees
10451 - 170 Street NW, Edmonton, AB T5P 4S7
T: 1-800-232-7284 F: (780) 930-3392
www.aupe.org

C21004V
AULReP

We made the offer as requested, and it was quickly rejected. Had the employer accepted it, we would have recommended ratifying a new collective agreement.

Instead, we are voting on the employer's subpar offer and recommending a NO vote. As well, the ALRB complaint is still outstanding and will be re-scheduled and heard. At no time has the Employer conducted relations in good faith. Their bargaining updates are full of inaccuracies and blatant lies even though the Employer has hired one of the most expensive law firms in Alberta. Perhaps neither the third-party nor Mr. Christianson could get the updates correct since they weren't in our meetings and have not made meaningful contact with your committee or negotiator.

It's clear the UCP government is using this Employer as puppets. Below is the offer the Employer tabled before the Provincial Bargaining Coordination Office got involved:

January 1 2019 - 0%

- \$500 lump sum payment for all full-time employees and prorated for part-time effective date of ratification.
- \$500 lump sum for seasonal/wage employees effective date of ratification, available to wage employees employed on September 30, 2019 or date of ratification/whichever date is earlier
- In the last two months, your elected negotiations team met five times to discuss how you can achieve a fair collective agreement - one that will bridge this round of bargaining with the next and set a precedent for all future negotiations.

January 1, 2020 - 0%

- Flexible Spending Account increased to \$950 (\$200 increase)

- Revised Administration Support, Administration (4%), and Mechanics (10%) Pay Schedules to come into effect on December 31, 2020.

January 1, 2021 - 0%

- \$500 lumpsum payment for all full-time employees and prorated for part-time.
- Any seasonal/wage employees rehired the first part of January 2021, shall also receive the \$500 lump sum payment.

This is the "Final Offer" you will vote on over September 14 and 15 that the Provincial Bargaining Coordination Office directed the Employer to make:

January 1, 2019 - 0%

January 1, 2020 - 0%

January 1, 2021 - 0%

- Revised Administration Support, Administration (4%), and Mechanics (4% - a decrease from the 10% originally offered).
- a \$500 lump sum payment to all permanent and seasonal/wage employees (prorated for part-time employees) employed on November 1, 2020

This final offer is considered receding horizons bargaining, which is what we claim in our ALRB complaint. We could also file a complaint for government interference and for surface bargaining or bargaining to impasse, but we believe the PBCO has already done a terrific job of ruining the good working relationship between the Special Areas Board, AUPE and the membership.

The Employer removed numerous monetary items from their initial offer and gave a weak reason for doing so, considering the amount of money they were willing to spend on legal help. Keep in mind the Employer did put minus 3% in year number three on the table, as they

Continues on Pg. 3



Alberta Union of Provincial Employees
10451 - 170 Street NW, Edmonton, AB T5P 4S7
T: 1-800-232-7284 F: (780) 930-3392
www.aupe.org

C21004V
AULReP

were directed to by the PBCO the day after the UCP government proposed the same to most AUPE members in Alberta.

Numerous arbitrations in Alberta have awarded salary increases of 1% in 2019, 2020 and 2021 to AUPE members in post-secondary and health care. There were many negotiated settlements of wage increases between 1% and 5% on 3-year deals. This is much more than what the Employer has put on the table. While we were told this round of bargaining had been budgeted and the money was still there, your Employer chose to spend countless dollars employing a law firm to stonewall us, write their bargaining updates and divide the membership. It is time to be heard.

As their update states, “We look forward to resolving all differences with AUPE and moving forward in the spirit of collaboration and cooperation.” How does the Employer suggest doing this when they refused all requests to meet with your bargaining committee and negotiator over the past two years, except for the ALRB-mandated Resolution Conference? Perhaps now that Mr. Christianson has been re-appointed, we can have meaningful bargaining meetings.

Truly it is unfortunate it has come to this. Your committee has been taking ALL members into consideration during this protracted round of bargaining. We believe if the government and lawyers had not got involved, and we had the opportunity to meet with the Employer we would have settled this long ago, as we have done historically in the past.

It is time to have your say on September 14, 15, & if needed the 16th, 2021. We ask you vote “NO” to ratifying this final offer to send a message to the Employer – to push them to sit down with your bargaining committee, have constructive dialogue focused on settling this long outstanding dispute, to stop needlessly

paying lawyers’ fees, and to honour the offer they made. The dollar amount we differ on is much less than what has been paid out as third-party legal fees.

This explanation is much longer than we would prefer, but a lot happened during this lengthy bargaining process. In short, we believe it is important to consider the Employer’s unhelpful behaviors (no collaboration, no cooperation) as well as their subpar, divisive contract offer, which is substantially worse than other AUPE agreements achieved in the province recently. We believe a NO vote will urge the Employer to reconsider the approach taken with this negotiation round and encourage them to return to the well-balanced method they used before, which benefited both parties in the past.

We will be sending out a spreadsheet that shows all the changes in language completed during this round of bargaining so members can have a full review of the proposed collective agreement. We will also be sending an electronic version of the agreement, this is only a draft version and there could be minor errors, as the Employer has not had a chance to review.

Please share this update with your coworkers. If you have any questions, please contact your bargaining committee.

SPECIAL AREAS BOARD NEGOTIATIONS TEAM:

Paulette Pratt pkp.2005@hotmail.com or 403-664-0549

Clint Nicholson poolshot69@yahoo.ca or 403-854-1056

Robin Lacelle robinlacelle@gmail.com or 403-363-9855

AUPE RESOURCE STAFF:

Christian Tetreault Negotiator, c.tetreault@aupe.org

Dave Malka Organizer, d.malka@aupe.org

Celia Shea Communications, c.shea@aupe.org



Alberta Union of Provincial Employees

10451 - 170 Street NW, Edmonton, AB T5P 4S7

T: 1-800-232-7284 F: (780) 930-3392

www.aupe.org

C21004V
AULReP