

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

October 2, 2020

Good afternoon, I hope this finds you safe and well.

As COVID-19 is still among us and is in fact spreading in the community at a much faster rate than earlier in the summer, it is imperative that we all do our part to slow the spread and work to keep ourselves, our families, and our communities safe. Please follow all recommended guidelines and encourage others to do so as well.

We have recently amended and extended the temporary layoff Letters of Understanding (LOUs) with the City of Edmonton and the Edmonton Public Library. Particularly with the City, this was done reluctantly as we have received a number of requests for recalls where we have disagreed with the City's rationale—in particular, in requests that circumvent seniority. However, we have a responsibility to all of our membership and have heard clearly how important the extension of benefits are to those still on temporary layoff. This is one of the main reasons the Union extended the Temporary Layoff LOU.

From the start of this pandemic, the Union has attempted to mitigate the financial cost to members in all bargaining units and continues to do so. It is telling that during this emergency, the City of Edmonton has embarked upon a journey to “Reimagine” the workplace. This project began long before the emergence of COVID-19. The “Reimagine” project and the recent City Auditor's report has conveniently tied “Reimagine” and COVID-19 together. It is now apparent that senior City administration, and a good portion of City Council, do not appreciate hard-working frontline workers. Instead, they are invested in protecting the extremely bloated out-of-scope management structure that they themselves are responsible for. As we continue to see more than a thousand employees on layoff, the City continues to hire more out-of-scope managers and post new Union positions when laid-off employees are available to fill those positions.

We continue to advocate on behalf of the membership in all of our bargaining units and are concerned how members who are assigned to work from home are coping with remote work. We continue to raise OH&S concerns in all bargaining units regarding: equipment, safety concerns, security issues, and costs incurred by individual employees working from home. Each and every member remains our primary concern and we continue to work on your behalf. At this time, it is more important than ever that we stand together. We need your help and support.

***Take care and stay safe,
Lanny Chudyk***

