



**UNION OF TAXATION EMPLOYEES - PSAC  
SYNDICAT DES EMPLOYÉ-E-S DE L'IMPÔT - AFPC**

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**CONGRÈS 2017 CONVENTION  
JULY 19 - 22 JUILLET  
OTTAWA, ON**

## **SECOND NATIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT REPORT TO THE 2017 CONVENTION**

It was an honour to be elected the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Vice-President of the Union of Taxation Employees at our convention in July of 2014. It was an even greater honour and a privilege to serve the membership over this three-year term.

In addition to the portfolio of Collective Bargaining, as well as, being a member of the Executive Committee per By-Law 7, Section 2, at the September 2014 Executive Council I was assigned the duties of Chair of the Technological Change Committee and the Co-Chair of the Equal Opportunities Committee. As this position is a volunteer position, it was a lot of work and some days were harder than others.

The primary roles and activities of the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Vice-President responsible for bargaining are set out in By-Law 10 Section 2 and 4 of the UTE By-Laws (copied below) and certain parts of Regulation 10.

### **BY-LAW 10 - DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

#### **Section 2 - Vice-Presidents**

1. The Vice-Presidents shall submit written reports on their assigned responsibilities at each regular meeting of the Executive Council and to the Convention.
2. If the office of President becomes vacant between Conventions or the incumbent becomes unable to perform the duties of the position, the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President shall assume the office temporarily.
3. In the temporary absence of the President and with the concurrence of the President, the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President shall exercise all the functions and shall be vested with all the powers of the President.
4. In the temporary absence of the President and the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President and with the concurrence of the President, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President shall exercise the functions and shall be vested with all the powers of the President.

5. In circumstances not covered by these By-Laws, the Executive Council shall have the authority to appoint persons to these positions temporarily.
6. At the meetings of the National Board of Directors of the PSAC, the Alternate to the President shall be the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President or in the absence of the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President shall be the Alternate.

#### Section 4

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President responsible for Collective Bargaining shall:

1. oversee the implementation of the Regulation governing Collective Bargaining procedures;
2. issue frequent bulletins on the state of negotiations during the bargaining process;
3. be the Chairperson of the Standing Bargaining Committee;
4. participate on the PSAC/CRA Negotiating Team;
5. be the Chairperson of the National Bargaining Committee;
6. be a member of the PSAC National Strike Co-ordinating Committee;
7. ensures that the bargaining process for UTE is handled in a sound manner in the best interests of the members; and
8. attends and participates in discussions and meetings in preparation for bargaining between PSAC/UTE and the employer.

In addition to the bargaining and committee work, I attend Executive Council meetings and President's Conference, attended annual general meetings, replaced the President at the PSAC National Board of Directors. It was a very busy three-year period. I enjoyed working with Bob and Marc and thank them for their support.

#### **BARGAINING**

When I was elected the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Vice-President the bargaining process was well under way having begun in 2012. As a result, Executive Council made the decision to keep the negotiating team that was in place as is and that I would join the team. During my time as a negotiating team member I participated in and attended:

- all bargaining sessions,
- all PSAC National Strategy/Strike Co-ordinating Committee (NSCC) meetings,
- two mediation sessions,
- a public interest commission,
- two ratification votes, and
- the signing of the collective agreement.

It was a very difficult process; especially given the fact we were put under Treasury Board for bargaining by the Harper government and the power the CRA team had appeared to be nil. As the bargaining process broke down, a resolution was passed by Executive Council to boycott consultation with the CRA.

It was a very proud day when the results of the first ratification vote were announced and our recommendation of “No” was supported by the membership. This coupled with the fact we had record turn outs at these meetings really showed us the membership was behind us. And in turn allowed us to go back to the table and make more gains for our members.

I believe one of the most important aspects of Collective Bargaining and unions in general is the engagement of our members. One on one conversations are best but having knowledgeable and dynamic activists speaking to the members on a regular basis is key. Many members do not wish to attend meetings to listen to a speaker when voting on an offer. I do not hold this opinion and since I have been involved with our last two votes I hold true to that opinion more than ever.

As of the writing of this report we have dates to return to the bargaining table to negotiate the “reopener” clause. We hope to have good news for our members after these meetings in May but if not then we move on to the next step of binding arbitration. During the bargaining process when I met with many members I always said the power of the bargaining team is given to them by the demonstrations of support in the field. We are there to represent the members at the table but the real power comes from the members and the support they show. Every time we ask the members for a show of support don’t forget management is watching us all and reports the activities as do the local president’s. These demonstrations of support help us more than the members realize I do believe.

## **TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE**

Technological change in today’s workplace is never-ending and relentless. Since the first technological change provisions were negotiated in 1975, the UTE has continually lobbied the employer both to give greater notice of planned technological change and to provide appropriate employee training.

The Committee meets at least twice a year at the national level with senior managers to discuss the implementation of new technology or changes to existing technology. This Committee also deals with problems that members identify as having been created as a result of technological change. This past three years we met with the CRA twice during my tenure as Chair due to the boycott in place on consultation.

The Committee strives to ensure that the employer realizes the human aspect of technological change in the workplace and how some of these changes affect the members. The Committee also continues to enlighten the employer on the rights of employees affected by a technological situation that are beyond the technological change articles of the collective agreement.

Thank you to the Committee members for all the hard work done on behalf of the members.

## **EQUALY OPPORTUNITIES (EO)**

I was originally assigned to the EO Committee as the co-chair and took over as chair approximately half way through the term. It was a pleasure to work with the committee to organize the three Regional and one National EO Conferences. These conferences were a great success. During this term, I was part of the selection committee which appointed the five equity representatives. We have made some changes to the input call letter to assist the members when applying. It is important that this call reach as many members as possible.

The UTE supports equal opportunity for all its members, regardless of sex, sexual orientation, age, mental or physical disability, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religious or political belief, family or marital status, or conviction for which a pardon has been granted.

The Employment Equity Act specifies that employers must consult and collaborate with Unions in employment equity policies, procedures, and the implementation of programs and action plans. The UTE strongly believes that collaboration and co-operation is to take place at all levels. The UTE has Guidelines available for Local Joint Employment Equity / Diversity Committees.

Union-management consultation on equity issues is also a priority. Ongoing meetings are held with management's National Employment Equity Coordinator and the Assistant Commissioner of Human Resources to discuss issues such as Employment Equity Action Plans, Employment Equity Strategic Direction, Workforce Analysis Results, awareness training on equity issues, special programs for members from designated groups and any issues that are barriers to the promotion of equal opportunities.

Again, due to the boycott on consultations there were limited meetings with the CRA during my tenure on the Committee.

Thank you to all the Committee members who worked on behalf of the membership.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> VICE-PRESIDENT AS A VOLUNTEER POSITION**

In my own personal situation, having occupied this position as a volunteer was very difficult. Some of the factors that made it such included:

- Prior to being elected to 2<sup>nd</sup> VP, I was a Local president for ten years. During 8 of those years I did not have a team reporting to me as management felt it was not fair to the team. They took my team from me. As an MG substantive and being given a team back after I was elected did not work. I was out of the office approximately 70% of the time, which included personal leave and union business. In my opinion, you cannot do a team leader job effectively nor efficiently under those circumstances. It has been a very stressful time.

- Travel from NL to other locations in the country took its toll on me. Travelling when flights were on time was difficult enough and was made even more difficult when the airline or the weather did not cooperate. Example; during one of the ratification votes in BC, I was travelling for 24 hours before I arrived at my destination.

I'm not saying that the position should be full time but I do not believe it should be eliminated either. It depends on the individual elected to the position, their situation/flexibility in the workplace, what other duties/committees are assigned and where they live and travel from plus other factors. There is plenty of work to go around and keeping this position will help the organization not hinder it in my opinion.

## **CONCLUSION**

I would like to thank Executive Council for their support and solidarity over these past three years as well as the Local president's and Executive members with whom I have had the pleasure of working with. The amount of work and dedication given by these people is to be commended.

As you know I am not reoffering for this position. It has been a long and difficult journey, one that I do not believe I can repeat without detrimental effects on my health. The travel schedule was brutal especially given the fact I travelled from Newfoundland.

I will be retiring from the CRA later this year with 35+ years of service, 25 of which where I held many different positions and served the membership. It has been a very rewarding time in my life to have had the privilege to work with so many wonderful, dedicated activists and to serve the membership of our union. Much love and respect goes out to too many people to name here. Keep fighting the good fight as will I, only now from a different perspective.

I wish the new 2<sup>nd</sup> National Vice-president, as well as the new Executive Council, all the best and a successful mandate. Solidarity Forever!

Respectfully submitted,

Madonna Z. Gardiner  
2<sup>nd</sup> National Vice-President