



**Minutes of General Membership Meeting  
2 May 2017 – 12:00 p.m.  
CIBC Hall**

<p>With 101 members in attendance, Emily Heikoop, President of Unifor Local 5555 chaired the meeting.</p>	
<p><b>1. Roll Call Of Officers</b></p>	<b>Appendix I</b>
<p><b>2. Approval of Agenda</b> Motion moved by B. Couchman that the agenda be approved as distributed</p>	<b>Carried.</b>
<p><b>3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting</b> Motion moved by K. Steinberg that the minutes of 15 February 2017 be accepted as distributed.</p>	<b>Carried.</b>
<p><b>4. Correspondence</b> No correspondence was reported.</p>	
<p><b>5. Introduction of New Members</b> One new member was welcomed to their first meeting</p>	
<p><b>6. Report Of The President</b> E. Heikoop reported that Unit 2, our members working at the Regional Medical Associates, will be in bargaining tomorrow and Thursday with a further two days scheduled in June.</p> <p>K. Sardella and E. Heikoop attended a meeting called by the Unifor Ontario Regional Director, Naureen Rizvi, of executive members from Locals in our area. These included locals from the Hamilton, Kitchener and Guelph area. It was informative and offered a chance to discuss issues in our areas as well on the national level.</p> <p>B. Couchman and E. Heikoop will be attending the Canadian Association of Labour Media conference this weekend. The Local’s delegates will then be attending the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) Convention next week. Information will be reported in our newsletters following these events.</p> <p>The Retirees’ Chapter of Local 5555 has been formed. They have established their bylaws and are planning workshops as well as recreational events. This group is not viewed to be in competition with MURA but will be more focused on our members.</p> <p>E. Heikoop prefaced the report of the Financial Secretary regarding the potential purchase of property by highlighting how we arrived at this point in the process. We have been renting our administrative office on Frid Street for 8 years. Last spring, our auditor recommended that we should try to diversify our investments and consider realty. As our 5-year lease ends in July, this would be a good time to consider it. K. Sardella began to do some research. We have spoken with other locals in the area to discuss the pros and cons of the locations they have. We started bringing information back to the membership. At last September’s meeting, a committee was formed. With guidance from the auditor, it was decided that the committee include the President, Vice-President, Financial Secretary and the Trustees, as it is under their mandate. The auditor also provided a list of commercial realtors to ensure that there are no potential conflicts and that we are dealing with an independent body. This has been a group effort including the Committee, the Executive Board, and discussion at Union Update meetings.</p>	

In response to members' questions regarding the benefits of buying a hall for members, E. Heikoop highlighted:

- A "safe space" for meeting with members regarding layoffs, harassment concerns, confidential situations
- A space that belongs to the membership, not to the Employer
- Potential to donate space to non-profit organizations or a community garden

## **7. Report of the Financial Secretary**

K. Sardella reviewed the package distributed to members by e-mail and distributed at the door. The Committee has been working on this since September. The package highlights: accessibility; potential future use of the property; the purchase will be an investment for the future benefit of members as well as cash flow analyses of a potential building purchase. Consideration must be given to current zoning. Re-zoning is a lengthy, challenging process. The City of Hamilton has specific bylaws relating to labour halls. As of December 31, 2016, the Local held investments totaling \$3,634,397.34. Purchasing a property will be an opportunity to diversify our investments. K. Sardella is willing to support a purchase, viewing it as a way to look to the future for our Local.

Comments from members included concern of putting more than 25% of our money into one form of investment. K. Sardella reiterated that suggestions from members would be addressed by the Executive Board. She further clarified that our investments do not represent our "strike fund". Should our members be in a strike position, the strike pay would come from the National union. If, as in 2001, our largest unit went on strike and the Local was to "top up" the members' strike pay by \$100. per week, it would cost approximately \$750,000. which we will still have in GIC's. We need to retain some funds that will be available should a situation arise.

Responding to a member, K. Sardella explained that the number of members who visit the administrative office varies depending on committee meetings/events, educational events and bargaining schedules. The member asked for a show of hands to indicate how many members in attendance have been to the Frid Street office and was surprised at the high response.

K. Sardella clarified that if we purchase a property, it will belong to our Local and not to the National union. As we currently do, our space is occasionally used by other locals. Unifor Local 87 representing workers at the Hamilton Spectator, have met in our boardroom as well as area courses have been held there. McMaster University Human Resources trained with our JAHC members at our office.

Concern was raised by a member regarding insurance liability including members travelling to or from an off campus location. K. Sardella reported that we currently have full insurance coverage at the administrative office and will do so at any future location. Risk management will be considered. The issue of insurance while travelling is separate for that of purchasing property.

Agreeing that we have a large membership, E. Heikoop stated that the potential purchase of property has been discussed at each membership meeting since last September as well as at the union update meetings held bi-weekly at off campus sites. It has also been addressed in e-newsletters. Each member has been encouraged to attend today's meeting to vote.

Discussion of interest rates and types of investments ensued. The Local's investment policy does limit our investments to ensure preservation of capital funds.

<p>M. Taylor commented on the limitations of \$1.5 million in today's realty market and requested to make an amendment to the motion to allow up to \$2 million to be spent.</p> <p>K. Sardella responded that an amendment could be considered once a motion has been made.</p> <p>It was clarified by K. Sardella that building maintenance would be included in future operating budgets of the Local.</p> <p>There was discussion of current realty markets. The cost analyses presented by K. Sardella are based on current expenses based on square footage of commercial properties. Commercial real estate is not growing at the same rate as residential properties.</p> <p>K. Sardella reviewed that our current investments, held on a five-year rolling cycle with BMO Nesbitt-Burns, are averaging 1.9% interest or between \$49,000 to \$53,000 per annum. The investments held with First Ontario Credit Union are at a similar interest rate.</p> <p>The operating budget for the Local is based on annual income and we work towards having a balanced budget each year. If there were residual funds at the end of a year, they would be added to the investments, but a balanced budget is our goal.</p> <p>M. Taylor raised concern that an e-vote should be held to allow maximum participation by members.</p> <p>E. Heikoop tested the house and it was determined that an e-vote will be held.</p> <p>M. Taylor spoke to the need for an Elections Committee. She reiterated that the previous e-votes were overseen by the National Union and they ensured that the information was received by all members of our Local.</p> <p>K. Sardella clarified for members that if an e-vote allows for the purchase of property, the lease on our administrative office will have to be renegotiated. They will attempt to get a lease on a month-to-month basis. If the e-vote fails, they will try to negotiate a three year lease rather than the current five year lease.</p> <p>When asked, K. Sardella read the motion she was prepared to move today: that Unifor Local 5555 use up to a maximum of 1.5 million dollars from our current investments for the purchase of a property for the Local.</p> <p>M. Taylor moved an amendment to the proposed motion to state: "...up to a maximum of 2 million dollars...". Seconded by B. Diacon.</p> <p>E. Heikoop stated that an e-vote will be held on the original motion.</p>	<p>Amendment Defeated</p>
<p><b>8. Reports of Officers, Standing Committees, Delegates</b></p> <p><b>a) Vice President</b></p> <p>B. Couchman reported that the University is still rolling out job descriptions. We have over 1,050 now. There have been some changes as some departments have restructured resulting in jobs changing from the original job descriptions. There is an arbitration to be heard this Friday regarding three job descriptions. There may be some others that will be carried over to the arbitration scheduled for November.</p>	

The Joint Anti-Harassment Committee welcomed some new members who were trained in January. Since then we had 2 new investigations start with 2 others that were ongoing and one more pending. There is a need for the Committee. If anyone has any questions or concerns regarding anti-harassment, they may contact B. Couchman directly. The University is reviewing the bullying policy as it is cumbersome. Although there was room for mediation, in the end it could be taken to a tribunal.

**9. Adjournment**

**APPENDIX I**

**All Units General Membership Meeting – 2 May 2017  
Roll Call Of Officers**

Emily Heikoop	President	Present
Beth Couchman	Vice President	Present
Karen Sutton	Recording Secretary	Present
Kim Sardella	Financial Secretary	Present
Jennifer Petteplace	Trustee	Present
Sarah Sullivan	Trustee	Present
Sarah-Kai Antanaitis	Guide	Present
Stephen Goertz	Sergeant-At-Arms	Regrets
Barry Diacon	Unit 1 Chair, Non-Teaching Staff	Present
Linda O'Hara	Unit 2 Chair, R.M.A.	Regrets
Jeremy McFarlane	Unit 3 Chair, Parking & Transit Services	Present
Gregory Hamilton	Unit 4 Chair, Special Constables	Present
Jim McAndrew	Health & Safety Coordinator	Present
	Young Workers Committee	Present
Rosemary Viola	Retired Workers Chapter	Regrets