



**Local Leadership Council Meeting
Tuesday, July 27, 2021
Via Videoconference
3:30 – 6:00p.m.**

DRAFT MINUTES

Present: G. Phillips (*Chair*), J. George, A. Coles, H. Delnick, K. McCurly, Peter, K. Holmes, K. Clark, L. Ladouceur, A. Nemeč, S. Rehman, J. Shaw, A. Picotte, J. Ouellette, S. Kleuskens, R. Phillips, A. Trau, P. Thomas

Regrets: D. Barty, L. Desjardins, M. Collins, D. Meyers, K. Mansfield, R. Cherry, J. Lafontaine, J. Squires

** At this time, CAPE's Statement on Harassment was read aloud. Jennifer Gorge was identified as the Anti-Harassment resource person for the meeting and concerns should be directed to her attention via email.*

1. Call to Order / Roll Call

The Local Leadership Council meeting was officially called to order at 3:30 pm. A roll call was performed. A request was put forth to hold a brief discussion on Bill C-65. It was stipulated that time permitting, this will be addressed towards the end of the meeting.

2. LLC Consultation on proposed Draft 2021/2022 Budget

A draft version of the 2021/2022 budget was previously circulated to LLC members. With respect to line item 1.1 "Dues Revenue", Finance Committee Chair H. Delnick prefaced by clarifying the discrepancy in the overstatement of \$480K for overall membership dues, which stemmed from the defeat of a motion by the NEC to increase members' dues by \$2. As a result, adjustments will be applied accordingly upon the approval of the budget. The motion to index dues on an annual basis (*equivalent to the rate increase negotiated in the Collective Agreement for EC memberships*) was approved by the NEC and will subsequently be put forth at the AGM for final approval. At present, the budget does not reflect calculations pertaining to the indexing of membership dues. The premise for the Finance

Committee putting forward a request for a dues increase was in light of dues remaining static since 2014, as well as to enable the organization to match modernization trends. An increase of approximately \$1M has been allocated towards labour and administration to respond to the increasing demands of the membership.

LLC members were afforded the opportunity to raise questions and provide comments as followed:

- While acknowledging the media coverage on workplace health and safety for interpreters, a recommendation was put forth to emphasize core issues impacting policy analysts, as well as the procurement of indicators on numbers of cases, incoming inquiries, representation etc. in order to better respond to the members, as well as for Local Leaders to be well-apprised on member-related issues. The Chair alluded to the lack the capacity, staff, LROs and adequate technology to provide this information given the amount of work involved in membership representation. However, the introduction of Microsoft Dynamics will facilitate addressing the issue raised and potentially render enhanced data and statistics.

Action Items: J. Ouellette to provide higher level data and statistics to the Local Leadership Network via email. In addition, J. Courty to forward the link of the Annual Report to LLC members as an additional source of information outlining members' dues allocation.

- Further clarification was requested with regards to the formula used for projected increases related to insurance costs (line item 8.6), as well as the President's travel (line item 12.3). In addition, it was asked whether funds have been allocated towards Steward training (line item 6). It was stated that the rationale for higher forecasted amounts for insurance costs is attributed to the number of renewals of insurance policies thus far. As for the President's travel, increases in airfare and hotel accommodations were factored in, coupled with preparations in entering a bargaining cycle, which will result in an anticipated increase of visits to locals. Moreover, the increase in travel costs is also due to the Association recently joining the CLC, where member travel costs must be budgeted accordingly. Lastly, amounts for Steward training are reflected in line items 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3, totaling \$120K.
- A comment raised suggested not to compare CAPE to PIPSC, nor to emphasize a lack of increase in dues going back to 2014 as this will likely not sway the membership, hence the need for taking a tactful, persuasive approach and offer clear and transparent reasons for allocating funds in a particular area prior to re-introducing the notion of a dues increase proposal to the NEC and/or the members. The attention should be on clear communication and information dispatched to Local Leaders in order that they in turn ensure constituents are adequately informed.
- In response to an inquiry on major changes to the budget, the Association engaged the services of a new investment firm to manage interest income, and to date has

yielded exceptional returns (10-fold) when compared to previous results. With the improved Investment Policy and internal work accomplished, a large increase in the surplus is projected. Referring to line item 2.2, all increases are directly related towards member support, be it bargaining or member relations in the workplace. In preparation of this budget proposal, amendments to the methodology on recording expenses were applied (*i.e.: purchase of fixed assets such as computer and software*) whereby they will no longer be expensed but rather capitalized and amortized over the life expectancy of the assets.

- To ensure value to the members, rationale as to the projected increase in expenditures for professional fees (line items 1.1 to 1.8) and surplus in the indexing was sought. The departure of the Director of Finance significantly impacted the numbers as external services such as Mercer had to be retained, as well as fees associated with the budget preparation. As for the surplus, the Chair responded it is attributable to unpredictable expenditures, coupled with the lack of staffing, leaving many positions vacant. Since then, positions have been filled with the exception being that of the Labour Relations position, which remains an ongoing challenge. In part, the surplus is also due to the investment income interest which was projected to be \$160K but emerged closer to \$500K; the portfolio increase accounts for a significant portion of the surplus (*although these funds cannot be spent as part of the investments*). Additionally, Treasury Board disbursed previously owed funds arising from the Phoenix issues. Therefore, the above unforeseen one-time revenue streams contribute to the overall projected increase highlighted in the budget.
- In response to a concern raised regarding a pronounced issue related to Labour Relation Services and whether consideration can be given to seeking different models to supplement the capacity for supporting employees, J. Ouellette recently met with the Senior Labour Relations Officer to discuss the staffing crisis for LROs as only 3 applications worthy of consideration were put forth. The next step is engaging a recruiting firm, which has been budgeted for accordingly. In addition, an offer will be extended to a retired LRO will be offered to work 5 days a week in the coming months in an effort to provide additional support for a particular case. The LLC was informed of the Educations Officer resignation; an internal competition has been issued for an acting position, which may be of interest to a LRO.
- In response to a question on majorly impacted line items as a result of COVID, the Chair mentioned that an increase cost of Government employees was triggered when working from home commenced and required the acquisition of equipment, as well as vacation expenses. In accordance with the Collective Agreement, vacation days required a pay out, thus contributing to the increase in expenditures.
- Referring to line item 10.1, an update on the current office space was provided whereby LLC members were informed that CAPE's current lease expires in 2023. The Office Accommodations Committee, a sub-committee of the NEC, was formed and tasked to explore more affordable locations in the NCR. The Association

engaged the services of a broker with the anticipation of reducing expenses over a 10-year lease, pending negotiations. Growth experienced over the previous decade was from 13 000 members to 21 000. While teleworking will continue, the Association must ensure workplace modernization to accommodate face-to-face interactions between LROs and employees with the goal of maximizing the use of office space. Moving costs will incur as a result; however, COVID has resulted in the downsizing of many companies, resulting in rental prices plummeting.

- It was asked whether further consideration was given to providing training for stewards in an effort to alleviate the workload of CAPE's LROs, as well as expanding the geographical field for LROs. In response, it was stated that the model under which CAPE operates does not employ stewards in the grievance process, as this is a political matter. With 85% of CAPE's membership residing in the NCR, the majority of LROs are working in Ottawa. The approach being taken is to provide the same level of service for the remaining 15% operating outside the NCR. LROs are allowed to travel once to a member's location in order to provide assistance.
- It was deemed beneficial to make the distinction and provide clarity regarding the roles of Stewards and Local Leaders vs. CAPE LROs; consideration should be given to developing a training program with this in mind.

Next Step: Process-wise, a MBM meeting will be held with all the membership, followed by a review by the Finance Committee for consideration and amendment if needed. Afterwards, the NEC will be informed of discussions deriving from the MBM. The final budget will be presented to the membership in November for ratification.

3. COVID-19

An update on Treasury Board guidelines pertaining to the re-integration into the workplace was shared with LLC members. Given the increase in vaccination rates and public health restrictions slowly lifting, TBS is looking at a gradual increase of occupancy of federal worksites beginning this Fall through a measured approach that considers building flexibility into the workforce while following Public Health guidelines. The objective is to optimize resources and enhance health services to Canadians by leveraging flexible work arrangements. In the short-term, the goal will be to consider re-integration focussed on employees in positions that require to work on-site, or in cases where employees wish to return to the workplace for mental health or other reasons. As a 2nd step, employees who have been working remotely will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. The 3rd step entails departments and agencies continuing to formulate longer term plans for the workforce. Treasury Board recognizes that a 'one-size fits all' approach is not applicable under these circumstances, hence the reason for establishing general principles and guidelines, and allowing each department to develop unique and tailored strategies. Consultations with bargaining agents are ongoing.

A comment was raised that cases of unvaccinated employees wishing to return to the workplace for mental health reasons will arise, thus further discussion is needed by TBS, in consideration of individuals rights. An update from the Re-integration Planning Team will be forthcoming in a month.

4. Update on Bill C-65: Act to amend Canada Labour Code (*Harassment & Violence*)

Training has been developed on C-65 with 4 lunch-and-learn sessions having been conducted so far (*2 in French, 2 in English*). Interested LLC members were encouraged to enroll.

The Local Leadership Council meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m. EDT.