

February 4 2016

CUPE 4207 Executive Committee Statement of Solidarity

In the past several days some of our members have observed a disturbing development. A notification of a proposed debate on food procurement policy for the February GMM reached people in the community, who together with some 4207 members, engaged in vitriolic attacks on social media, targeting one particular member of the local's Executive Committee. This member was singled out as if she was unilaterally responsible for the proposed changes to our local's procurement policy.

Our local is governed by the *membership*, the executive committee, the stewards council and committees. There is no singular member who can unilaterally impose decisions on the affairs of the union. Our decision making is a collective effort. Blaming and offending one single person for changes one disagrees with is in contradiction with the CUPE Equity Statement.

The procurement policy has been debated on two levels – within the Policy, Bylaws and Finance Committee and at the Executive Committee. No policy or bylaw change can take place without the general membership – it is the members who determine what the union does. No member of the local can take decisions concerning the whole union into their own hands and act on behalf of the union. Decisions made at any of these committee levels are taken to the general membership for a debate, input and final vote.

The Executive Committee condemns these attacks on our member. Such behaviour precludes constructive discussion and creates a hostile environment for all members of the union. The CUPE Equality Statement binds us to mutual respect, cooperation and understanding.

As unionists, mutual respect, cooperation and understanding are our goals. We should neither condone nor tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any individual or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Members, comrades, we must cease sowing antagonism within our ranks. While we engage in constructive debates and lively exchanges of opinions we must stick to the principles of the Equity Statement. Only on the grounds of an open, honest and respectful form of activism can we make inroads into improving our working conditions and concomitant social advancement. We need to realize that we share commonality that is greater than our differences.

Our Unit 1 and 2 contracts are up in spring and late summer. We need to pull together and show the employer that we are force to be reckoned with!

In solidarity

Executive Committee

CUPE 4207 Bylaws for reference

Article 4: Organizational Structure

4.1 The governing bodies of the Local shall consist of the following:

(a) The Membership

(b) The Executive Committee

(c) The Stewards Council

(d) Committees: Committees of the executive maybe formed to make specific recommendations to the executive on any given issue.

Committees of the general membership may also be formed, open to all members in good standing.

Committees can work toward new policy or on the basis of already existing policy, but they cannot contravene the Local's by-laws, and must not act so as to undermine the policies duly enacted by the general membership.

7.2 Duties of the Executive Committee

(a) The Executive Committee shall take such actions and render such decisions as may be necessary to carry out the decisions and instructions of the membership of the Local, or, between general meetings. The Executive Committee shall enforce the Constitution of the Union and the by-laws of the Local and the provisions of all agreements between the Employer and the Employees, and shall coordinate Union-Local affairs.