

PLEASE POST

Date: July 7, 2010

To: All BCGEU Members Employed at Western Pacific Marine – Arrow Lakes Ferry Division and Kootenay Lake Ferry Division

Re: Bargaining Update – Strike Vote Meetings

Bargaining reached an impasse with Western Pacific Marine on July 5, 2010. Although some significant improvements have been made, a number of key issues remain outstanding. Union proposals regarding the introduction of a new vessel, improvements to health benefits, premiums for additional duties, and the reclassification of deckhands, cable ferries and marine clerks remain outstanding. The Employer has also refused to renew the Letter of Understanding to continue the existing shifts at Needles and will not extend the same Education Leave provisions to Arrow Lakes that are currently enjoyed at Kootenay Lake. We are also seeking a general wage increase while the Employer is insisting on a two-year wage freeze. Your Bargaining Committee is not prepared to sign a tentative agreement that doesn't include a wage increase and leaves many key issues unresolved, we are therefore taking a strike vote and seeking the assistance of a mediator.

Your Bargaining Committee is pleased with the progress to date and thinks that it's important that you know what has been accomplished so far. The following is a brief overview of the agreed to amendments:

- Kootenay Lake vacancies will be filled in the same way as Arrow Lakes. Jobs will no longer be posted; they will now be filled on the basis of seniority and years of capability.
- Shift premiums have been increased by 10¢ to \$1.25 for afternoon shift and \$1.35 for night shift.
- Unscheduled overtime will first be offered to employees on shift; if working all of the overtime would result in less than 8 clear hours, employees who aren't working will be called in. Overtime will be called out to regular employees within the classification, then regular employees in a lower classification in descending order, then auxiliary employees. Substitution will not be used if it will result in overtime in a lower classification, unless all employees in the classification where the vacancy originated have declined the overtime.
- Overtime will be paid at double after the first hour instead of after 2 hours.
- The overtime meal allowance has been increased to \$14.50.
- Vacation has been increased to 36 days in years 26 to 29 and 38 days on the 30th year and thereafter.
- Bereavement leave is increased from 1 day to 5 days for the death of a grandparent.
- Special leave of 1 day will be granted to attend a child custody hearing.
- Expenses for leave for medical and dental care have been increased to a maximum of \$500.00 from \$350.00.
- Kootenay Lake members will be able to carry over 10 days vacation instead of 5.

- Arrow Lakes members will be paid out for unused vacation in excess of the allowable carryover in the pay period following December 31st in each calendar year.
- Compassionate Care leave of 8 weeks with EI benefits in accordance with federal legislation has been added.
- Level 3 First Aid is increased from \$51.00 to \$55.00 biweekly.
- Level 2 First Aid is increased from \$39.00 to \$43.00 biweekly.
- Vehicle allowance is increased from 49¢ to 50¢ per km.
- Meal allowances have been increased on April 1st of each year as follows: breakfast \$11.50, \$12.00, \$12.50; lunch \$13.00, \$13.50, \$14.00; dinner \$22.00, \$23.50, \$25.00.
- Where safety-toed footwear is required by WCB or the Employer, employees will be reimbursed \$100.00 in 2010 and \$85.00 each year thereafter. Auxiliary employees will be reimbursed \$100.00 after 1827 hours and \$85.00 for each 1827 thereafter. Unused portions of the allowance will be carried forward from year to year.
- Heat and dirty money is increased from \$6.75 to \$7.50 an hour. The minimum for clean up of excrement and vomit has been increased to \$9.00 and blood has been added to this provision. Working on main engines or generator engines within 2 hours of shut-down and welding or torch cutting of galvanized or coated metal has been added to this Article.
- Payment in lieu of benefits for auxiliary employees is increased on April 1 of each year as follows: 2010 - 62¢ per working hour or \$43.40 biweekly; 2011 - 64¢ per working hour or \$44.80 biweekly; 2012 - 66¢ per working hour or \$46.20 biweekly.
- Auxiliary employees who work a statutory holiday will be paid the same as regular employees working a statutory holiday.
- Auxiliary employees will receive STIIP benefits if they are scheduled to work and then become ill or if they would have worked had they not become ill.
- The Job Sharing language has been replaced by a Deferred Salary Leave Plan that will enable employees to defer their salary and take paid time off later.
- The Employer has offered to make the Kootenay Lake pay grid consistent with the Arrow Lakes pay grid and to do the same with the benefits plan.

Although some of these changes are significant, we feel that a wage increase is justified. When the inland ferries were privatized all affected employees in the same classification were making the same rate of pay. In five short years that has changed dramatically, people working for WaterBridge Equipment at Francois Lake are now paid almost 4% more than people doing the same work on Kootenay Lake. Your Bargaining Committee says this is unfair and that the inequity needs to be addressed. Western Pacific Marine has responded by saying they can't offer a general wage increase.

We are asking that you support us in our efforts to get a fair deal by voting yes to a strike.

Meetings will be held as follows:

July 20, 2010

4:30 p.m.

Revelstoke Community Centre
600 Campbell Avenue, Revelstoke

July 21, 2010

10:30 a.m.

Revelstoke Community Centre
600 Campbell Avenue, Revelstoke

July 21, 2010

2:30 p.m.

Celista Community Hall
5456 Squilax Anglemont Road, Celista

July 22, 2010

10:00 a.m.

Fauquier Community Hall
117 Oak Street, Fauquier

July 23, 2010

12:30 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.

Balfour-Harrop Fire Department Hall
308 Beggs Road, Nelson

A ballot box will also be set up at the following BCGEU offices from July 12 to July 21:

West Kootenay Area Office, 2316 Columbia Avenue, Castlegar, BC V1N 2X1 (Telephone: 250-365-9979)

Kamloops Area Office, 158 Oriole Road, Kamloops, BC V2C 4N7 (Telephone: 250-372-8223)

Okanagan Area Office, 214-3001 Tutt Street, Kelowna, BC V1Y 2H4 (Telephone: 250-763-6405)

Please ensure that you attend one of these important meetings.

In solidarity

YOUR BARGAINING COMMITTEES

Arrow Lakes Ferry Division

James Dunne, Chairperson
Greg Cooper, Member
Monika Cooper, Member
Henny Hanegraaf, Staff Representative

Kootenay Lake Ferry Division

Paul Moreau, Chairperson
Dan MacDonald, Member
Sean Murphy, Member
Gary Postnikoff, Member (Alternate)

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BU\WPM\ALF-KLF\BB4 – Update (FA-614)

Distribution: All Arrow Lakes and Kootenay Lake Ferry Worksites
Component 20 Chairperson Byron Goerz
Jaynie Clark, Component 20 BCGEU Staff Administrative Representative
Wiho Papenbrock, Region 3 Coordinator