

## Minutes of Joint Standing Committee

Meeting came to order at 10:40 am on March 2, 2023

**Attendance:** Mark Evans, Patrick Service, Steve Schneider, Keith Dillabough, Mike Byers, Ken Churchill, Darren McCrabb

### **Union Agenda:**

#### **Accommodation Meeting:**

Union: In February an email regarding scheduling an accomodation meeting was sent out, still haven't heard a response.

Company: Yes, lets get going on this.

Union: Send us a list of dates that the company is available, and we will coordinate things.

#### **Unifor Elections Committee Time Off:**

Union: Last time we talked you asked about the union executive/ committee list and yes, Tanner Moffat and Todd Fletcher are on the Locals list as Election Committee members. Did you approve their time off, next week with Carly as per our discussion.

Company: Yes, sent her an email confirming last night.

#### **Hiring/ Apprentices:**

Union: Would like an updated on apprentices.

Company: Had previously stated that the Apprenticeship Committee would meet in May as there was a need to get through recruitment period. Want to take 1 millwright for the summer and 1 millwright / electrician for the new year.

### **Posting/ Training:**

Company: Shared recruitment tracker spreadsheet. We realised that we couldn't sustain our current hiring practices as they were not keeping up. Made funnel bigger and went hog wild on testing. Currently have 6 new spareboard employees. 2 starting this Tuesday, 2 next week, and 2 the following Tuesday. We believe we will hit our 15 quota before the end of the contract year. Added a second medical testing company to speed up the medical portion and hired Jim Nybo to address the interview backlog.

Union: Do you think 15 new employees is enough.

Company: That is our breathing room number. That's when we would put up department postings and assess how many more we would need and potentially hire more to supplement. This would also be where we check if 246 is still running as it sounds like Corporate will want to keep 246 running.

Union: Is the Company not accepting postings until you hit the 15 new hires mark?

Company: Yes

Union: We have spareboard full of broke people, no wipers. Why are you waiting to hire 15 more people before putting up postings?

Company: We currently have 80 overtimes in converting, 12 MH and 5 in PM. That's the scope and one of the reasons why more are trained employees are needed in Converting. It is also an easier position to train.

Union: We have 19 employees on the Main Spareboard. Would it not make sense to get a head start on training and at least train a couple main board spares in the Paper Mill while you have a chance. Waiting until you hire 15 more you will run out of time before vacation crunch. Currently there is no training happening.

Company: Would it be better to train wipers or would it be better to train elsewhere? It would be better to put up a couple postings first as you might as well train wipers that want to post into the department.

### **OT on the schedule:**

Company: Overtime on the schedule is a manual process. It happens in the Papermill but I don't know if it happens anywhere else.

Union: Yes, but putting names in the overtime spots is manual also.

Company: We would need to double check as running the schedule again might put the names in automatically. Does converting publish their schedule as frequently.

Union: No, they only get a schedule on Thursday & Friday therefore it may be worthwhile including them as they have computers that they can access their schedule on.

### **Electrical Policy:**

Company: We had sent a note to Troy saying, no thanks to the electrical 10-hour shift proposal. He wanted me to put a more formal notice together, for posting, so it is on the agenda to complete.

### **Materials Handling SOP:**

Union: We haven't seen minutes from the last meeting but you had it down that we would ratify the policy changes through the minutes.

Company: We can do that now as the Company is prepared to ratify. There was one other policy we wanted to discuss?

Union: Papermill- spares following a crew take vacation as part of the crew. One line regarding this was missed when the policies were revised. It looks like it did not carry over from one page to another and got cut-off. We want it to be added back in.

Company: Okay.

### **Vacation Schedule:**

Union: Switchboard sends out a whereabouts schedule so that everyone knows what managers/ supervisors are off. We are asking for something similar so that employees can see who is off prior to submitting time off request.

Company: The information is that you end up running 2 systems in tandem. One system has to be accurate as it pays you and the other is a simple excel that would be less accurate, we are exploring a system so that there is only one that can do both to minimize the potential work load.

### **Data on overtime:**

Company: We believe it is leaning towards 12%.

Union: That surprises us as we have had years with upwards of 18% and the last year seems to be much busier with all the open spots.

Company: Yes, that was around 2013-14 when we were appointing like crazy.

Company accessed and provided overtime stats: 2018 – 10%, 2019-9%, 2020-9%, 2021-10%, 2022-14%

### **Company proposal response:**

Union: We took a serious look at proposal. We see this as an opening of the CA. If this is what the Company wants, then what is it worth. If we need to take this to the floor it won't be free, we will need to sell it to our membership. The banked time proposal wont cut it as it also contractual.

Company: Don't you want that as a freebee.

Union: It is a contractual obligation also, so how can we go against the CA with that and then say no to others. The Company would come back on us and use that as a hammer. Does not seem to be a freebee.

Company Caucus: Company came back at 11:57 pm

Company: We had lots of discussion. We want to understand the unions position on the stats. Our language is from the pulp sector. An outage for them is a major planned event however we have a high degree of volatility due to consumer sales.

Pens down discussion:

Union: We understand the nature of the business and if you want the flexibility to run equipment after 30 days notice has been given then there should be no reason, we cant put together a policy or letter of understanding governing the process and expectations. Currently there is nothing written governing this process so in the event of an issue the Local needs to abide by the terms of the collective agreement.

Company: Proposal was to get people to the machines. A whole lot of this is based on the fact we don't have enough people. We understand core of issue. We understand the locals concerns regarding opening collective agreement. Our manning issues have gone all the way up to Kruger and they keep complaining that we are turning into another Memphis. Getting the wrong kind of attention so it is important to us as a company. We propose partial crews, not ideal solution. If we are down a person then we run a reduced crew at 50% speed, can't be a senior only. Other one is in the contract also, having the Union Standing committee help us find people to work OT. We currently have 14 members off on WI. Not saying the union hasn't been willing to help.

Union: When you refer to the local needs to help the company man their machine we pretty much do that now. We talk with our members and have been doing that consistently. There is not a lot more we can do, as a local as the membership is disgruntled and some that normally work OT have said they wont work anymore.

Company: We have been losing cases since 2021. We did a masterful job leading up to this at plugging the wholes. We need something that will take care of things in the short term.

Union Caucus: Union came back at 1:11 pm.

Union: After discussion we would be willing to accept BT extension proposal as a freebee. We would also agree to a vacation extension up to June 30, 2023. We believe this would allow the Company scheduling flexibility and free up individuals to get through the year end vacation crunch. What would the company be willing to buy this with. This is technically opening the CA so we would need something in return if we were to sell this to the membership.

Company: What do you want for it.

Union: Not sure ourselves. We have discussed and not sure what the membership would accept or what the Company has the ability to offer. Maybe the Company can discuss options and present us with something. Another option would be to pay double time for overtime in the short term. Might incentivise individuals to work overtime.

Pens down discussion.

Company: The company will consider unions response and respond later once we have had a chance to discuss. It should be rather quickly. Thank you for taking the time to consider this.

## **New topics:**

### **Incumbency of retirees:**

Company: Converting allowing employees that plan to retire to take their earned time off in a lump prior to retirement. However, it is the Locals position that that person is out of the system and if they want to work overtime they go to the back of the bus with regards to incumbency which may be unfair to our senior employees.

Union: This has been a consistent process throughout the mill. When someone takes their lump sum entitlement prior to retiring a move is usually made for them. Therefore, it would be unfair to the person that took over that position as they would not be able to exercise their incumbency entitlement if someone that is technically considered retired comes back and bumps them for overtime.

Company: Could have two incumbents.

Union: This has historically been a special deal that resides outside of the collective agreement for retirees, and it has been granted due to the expectation that these individuals have signed their papers and are not returning to work. Therefore, they are allowed to take all their earned time instead of getting paid out in a lump sum after retirement which helps them financially. Having said that the Local will discuss further.

### **Accommodation:**

Company: We have been holding the third Stores position open due to potential accommodations. Can we proceed with making this a permanent posting.

Union: Lets hold off until after our next accommodation meeting. We can make it permanent then if there are no more potential accommodations.

### **Business update:**

Company: Behind in cases year to date. January we were 10,000 favourable. Poly, natural gas was high which ended up put us in the whole by \$80,000. Up against it as a cost of reduction. Were asked for 2 million, but short 1 mill.

Safety wise we will park the daily visit and do 4 focused meetings a month. Supervisors will pull out an sop and ask people to show us how it is done. May be less frequent but more in depth.

Getting a lot of Paper purchase complaints regarding price of \$42.00, just a case of KS is \$22. There is \$66 dollars of just toilet paper not including the Scotties and towel.

PM#4 hood will cost 5 million. Will receive 1 million from fortis BC, \$300,000 Hydro and \$700,000 from clean BC in the form of rebates however it is contingent on being done by March 15. On the plus side back east is supporting us in trying to get the capital approved asap. This will help us with the down payment however the hood is still 5 years out once approved.

Division E dust system, parts will start showing up shortly. Expecting to have most of it done by the end of Mach which will hopefully address the Worksafe BC order.

Next Meeting tentatively scheduled for May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

Meeting Adjourned.

Darren McCrabb

President

Unifor Local 456