

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES DISCUSSION PAPER

CUPE Local 30 Committees



INTRODUCTION:

This discussion paper is designed to provide members, particular newcomers, and other interested committee-watchers with a basic understanding of the procedures and functions of Local 30's various committees.

WHAT IS A COMMITTEE?

A committee is really the working unit of an organization. Committees allow more people to be involved and expand the support base of the organization. Committees build commitment of members to the organization. Effective organizations are often directly related to effective committees.

WHY SERVE ON A COMMITTEE?

There are a number of reasons:

- Committees help shape many of the things that will happen as we continue to evolve as a Union community.
- Committees provide another mechanism for your elected officials to hear what you have to say.
- Committees help your Union strive to represent everyone's interests and as a result, your Union becomes a strong and united community for everyone.

WHAT PURPOSE DOES A COMMITTEE SERVE?

If used properly committees can¹:

- Allow for sharing of responsibilities ~ the specialized skills and interests of members are used to their full advantage
- Involves more members and leaders ~ more members get involved in the detail work of the organization
- Uses member and leader skills to their best advantage ~ responsibilities are shared according to skills and interests of members
- Allows General Membership meetings to run more smoothly ~ issues can be explored in more detail outside the General Membership meeting where only results are reported or recommended
- The work of the organization becomes more efficient ~ matters can be discussed and reviewed in detail by a committee and recommendations brought to the General Membership meetings
- Brings valuable insight into the organization ~ new or inexperienced members can develop confidence by serving on committees

WHO CAN SERVE AND HOW ARE COMMITTEE MEMBERS SELECTED?

Local 30 has various committees and draws the committee members from the rank and file of the membership. Members of committees can be elected or selected on a regular basis. The right to stand for committee selection and to participate in the deliberations of a committee is extended to all Local 30 members as cited under Section 5 of the bylaws. Selecting from the entire membership is the best way to ensure that you get the people with the right skills, interests and commitment to the task.

¹ "Effective Committees" by Carmen Andrew July 13, 1999. [Alberta Agriculture Food and Rural Development](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca) www1.agric.gov.ab.ca

WHAT ROLE DOES COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND THE COMMITTEE CHAIR SERVE?

Committee members can move motions, participate in debate and vote. Because procedures in committee tend to be more informal, there is no need for a seconder when moving a motion, nor is notice required before it is proposed. Moreover, committee members can speak more than once on a question in committee and without any specific limitation of time. The committee chair isn't necessary the technical expert of the committee. The chair principle duties revolve around the operations of the committee itself. The chair's role is to preside over its meetings, guide its deliberations and to seek to maintain order and decorum. The committee chair usually reports to the General Membership meetings when the committee wants to bring ideas, actions or recommendations to the membership through their reports.

WHAT TYPES OF COMMITTEES REGULARLY MEET AT LOCAL 30?

The number and type of committees depend on the needs of the Local². Currently, our Union on average has 11 committees that represent and review matters in detail for the membership. All committees should have at least one board member on them³. There are two reasons why this is done. First, it is so the board is aware of what is happening within the committees. Second, it is done because committees have typically brought forward their recommendations to the executive board and then they have gone forward to the membership as board recommendations.

There are two basic kinds of committees⁴:

1. **Standing-** these permanent committees are created by standing orders, rules, by-laws, or regulations of the union and perform some of the regular on-going tasks of the local. A standing committee can also be empowered to inquire into and report upon such matters as are referred to it from time to time by the Executive or the General Membership. Currently, our Union Executive is calling for members to serve on the following standing committees:

EDMONTON ASSOCIATION OF CIVIC EMPLOYEES: Working with the bargaining agents of ATU No. 569 and IBEW No. 1007, the function of this committee is to prepare collective bargaining proposals and to negotiate our Association of Civic Employees benefit agreement.
COMMITTEE MEMBERS REQUIRED: This committee consists of the President or Designate, and/or staff, one or more active delegates up to the number allowed by the Association elected by the membership. (Article IX/Section 1)

EDMONTON AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL: The Labour Council meets once a month, and acts to coordinate activities of labour members in different workplaces across the city. The council organizes strike

² See Local 30's current Bylaws Pages 3-4

³ Retired members of Local 30 may sit on any committee

⁴ "Our Union" Participant's Handbook CUPE-Union Development Department, Pg. 28

support, education courses for union members and political action at the local lever, and much, much more! The Council meets every third Monday of the month at 7:00 pm at the Carpenters & Joiners Hall (10425 Princess Elizabeth Ave. **COMMITTEE MEMBERS REQUIRED: Six with two alternates.** (Article IX/Section 2)

POLITICAL ACTION/ANTI-PRIVATIZATION:

Local 30 is mindful of its role within the process as it seeks to advance a political agenda for our members. This committee regularly spearheads drives for specific municipal political changes on behalf of members, coordinates union participation in electoral campaigns, and encourages its membership to take an active role in their communities. **COMMITTEE MEMBERS REQUIRED: SIX** (Article VII/Section 10)

SOCIAL COMMITTEE:

The function of this committee is to arrange and conduct all social and recreational activities of the Local either on the committee's own initiative or as a result of decisions taken at membership meetings. **COMMITTEE MEMBERS REQUIRED: FIVE** (Article VII/ Section 6)

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:

You don't need previous journalism experience to be part of this committee, just a desire to write and be creative in communicating to the membership in our newsletter. **COMMITTEE MEMBERS REQUIRED: FIVE** (Article VII/Section 8)

EDUCATION COMMITTEE:

Some of the functions of this committee are to arrange for representation of the Local at any appropriate and available educational seminar or conference and submit recommendations according to the Executive Board. Instructing delegates in the preparation of reports to the membership on seminars and conferences; cooperate with the Union Development Department and Communications Branch of CUPE, and with the regional education representative, in implementing both the Local and CUPE's policies in these fields. **COMMITTEE MEMBERS REQUIRED: FIVE** (Article VII/Section 3)

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE:

This committee is active in obtaining and reviewing pertinent site-specific information on worksite health and safety concerns. Members may also participated in workshops, and with other and union leaders in health and safety matters. On occasion members may be involved in work site visits to observe and report on various health and safety issues. **COMMITTEE MEMBERS REQUIRED: FIVE** (Article VII/Section 9)

MEETING ATTENDANCE COMMITTEE:

Getting members out to meetings is challenging, if not daunting. How can our Union summon their resources to get more people meaningfully involved in the process of union meetings, so that their input makes a difference. **COMMITTEE MEMBERS REQUIRED: THREE** (Article VII/Section 4)

WELFARE COMMITTEE:

This committee deals in strict confidential matters regarding member's requests for financial assistance in times of distress. There are very clear and distinct criteria, which need to be met prior to approving financial assistance to any member. The committee also advises Union members of other opportunities that may be open to access for assistance. **COMMITTEE MEMBERS REQUIRED: FOUR** (Article VII/ Section 2)

ENVIROMENTAL COMMITTEE:

This committee is responsible for informing the Executive and membership on issues that effect the workplace. The committee may do this by attending conferences, conventions, and workshops that update them on environmental awareness, for example, Water Watch. **Committee Members Required: Six** (Article VII/Section 11)

2. **AdHoc/Special**-these committees are appointed and approved by the membership for a specific purpose on a short-term basis or when the Local becomes involved in a special project that requires a good deal of work. An example of this type of committee is the Restructuring Task Force Committee. Currently, our Union Executive is calling for members to serve on the following ad hoc committees:

HISTORICAL COMMITTEE:

Unions in Canada have been active for more than 125 years. Local 30 has a proud labour history of 85 years within the City of Edmonton. Members need to preserve and to learn the vital roles their predecessors played in the growth and development of Local 30. **COMMITTEE MEMBERS REQUIRED: ONE TO THREE**

CONCLUSION:

Your Union is governed by its members, for its members. And to do our best job possible, we need your help. Serving on a committee is one way to help. It takes all of us to make this work. If this rings true to you, then maybe we can count on you to get involved and serve on one or two committees. Typically, committees meet once a month. If serving on one of the above committees interests you, please submit your name and payroll number with your choice and we will gladly contact you. Remember interested individuals do not require specific experience, simply the desire and commitment to serve your Union is all that is required.

REFERENCES:

"Report to CUPE Local 30" Discussion Paper, by Dianne Wyntjes Regional Director, Alberta. July 27, 1998