

**Agriculture Union
National Council Meeting
April 16-19, 2007
Ottawa, Ontario**

MINUTES

In Attendance

National Executive:

Yves Ducharme, National President; **Bob Kingston**, 1st NEVP; **Debbie Forsythe**, 2nd NEVP; **Denis Sicard**, 3rd NEVP; **Howard Willems**, 4th NEVP.

Regional Vice-Presidents:

Brenda Baergen, Northern Saskatchewan; **Sam Barlin**, Manitoba, North Western Ontario & Nunavut; **Michele Coe**, Southern Alberta; **Ron Filteau**, Southern Saskatchewan; **André Grégoire**, Eastern Quebec; **Bob Jackson**, Western British Columbia and Yukon; **John Langs**, North East Ontario; **Allan MacRae**, Western Atlantic; **Darrell-Lee McKenzie**, Eastern British Columbia; **Glenn Miller**, South Western Ontario; **Fabian Murphy**, Eastern Atlantic; **Barry Payne**, Eastern Ontario, Ottawa-Gatineau; **Raphaël Tarasco**, Western Quebec; **Mike Vanson**, Northern Alberta and Northwest Territories.

Directors:

Curt Elash, CGC; **Marianne Hladun**, EO; **Meraiah Krebs**, PSC & CSPS; **Idelta Vieira**, DND.

Staff:

Larry Budge, Administrative Officer; **Jerry Kovacs**, Term Service Officer; **Elaine Massie**, Service Officer; **Sylvia Prowse**, Service Officer; **Sylvie Rochon**, Service Officer.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Yves Ducharme, the National President.

2. Opening Remarks

Yves greeted everyone; he mentioned that so far this year he's been at four regional seminars and is happy to note that he's seeing new members in attendance. He talked about the Union's involvement in political action issues: maternity/paternity (CFIA); official languages (DND) and Bill C-257.

3. Adoption of Agenda

Additions:

21 – Principles for Reassignment

➤ **M/S/C** – MacRae/Barlin – THAT the agenda, including addition above, be adopted.

4. Hours of Session

Proposed hours of session:

Day 1:

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

4:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. – Q&A

Day 2:

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. - Standing Committees meetings

1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. - Standing Committees meetings

Day 3:

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Standing Committees Reports

1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. or until completion of business

Day 4:

Training session – Item 12

- **M/S/C** – MacRae/Barlin – THAT the proposed hours of session be adopted.

5. Approval of the November 2006 Council Minutes

- **M/S/C** – McKenzie/Elash – THAT the November 2006 minutes be adopted.

6. Business Arising out of Previous Minutes

There were no items.

7. Finance and Communications

Item was referred to the Finance Standing Committee.

8. National Office Staff

Yves provided update; he informed Council members that the Executive decided to extend Jerry Kovacs' term to May 2008. From an operational point of view, Yves discussed final level grievance updates and mentioned that in discussions with our services officers it's becoming clear that the case load is starting to pile up in the PSAC's G&A section. In an effort to try and get things moving we will be gathering as much info as we can so that we can inform the PSAC of our concerns.

9. Employer Updates

Agriculture Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)

Jerry provided everyone with written information regarding the work that remains with the EG Review grievances. For her part, Sylvia provided Council members with an update regarding a recent meeting with HR; she informed Council that our concerns regarding H&S duties performed by EG's will be addressed in the form of an addendum in the model work descriptions and to that end Jerry will be working with locals to identify which grievances are affected by this change. Also, regarding EG's over at PFRA, they too will be included in the EG Review but for now the emphasis will be on completing the GL Review. With respect to GL positions studied in Lennoxville and Lethbridge, the Phase I report has been prepared and further action will be worked out by the end of April. Following Sylvia's update, she answered questions from Council members on the GL Study Review.

Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

Bob Kingston provided Council with updates on ongoing issues; the new senior managers have brought with them a new level of cooperation and this has improved our labour relations with the Agency; discussions on several fronts, such as H&S and Duty to Accommodate Training, have resumed and RVP's are to inform us of any hot topics that need to be addressed. On the PI Review, the Agency has demonstrated a desire to resolve the protracted dispute and a meeting early in May is scheduled; more information will be posted as it becomes available.

Canada School of Public Service – Public Service Commission (CSPS-PSC)

Meraiah and Bob Kingston gave Council updates – over at the CSPS and regarding changes brought on by the New Language Training Model, we've been informed that a Work Force Adjustment exercise will not be necessary as reduction in staffing requirements will be achieved via current attrition rate. Regarding H&S, the employer has agreed to provide training.

Department of National Defence (DND)

Idelta gave a progress report – she stated that Union Management Committees as well as H&S Committees are still not in place everywhere as the employer remains confused by what to do to get these committees underway. Regarding St-Jean, the school has now lost 33% of its space which means less room for students; and when DND announced that it wanted to lower bilingual requirements, the Union decided it was time for some political action; to that end, Yves and Idelta held a Parliamentary press conference last week to denounce DND's latest decision.

Canadian Grain Commission (CGC)

Yves noted that Alex Crane was elected Alternate Director for the CGC.

Curt provided Council with an update. He stated that the work environment has become highly politicized to a point where he feels it's starting to have an impact on how members go about their work. On the subject of overtime and the impact on H&S, Raphaël mentioned that with the vast increase in shipments, the CGC has come to the realization that it must hire more people.

10. Communications

Item was referred to the Finance Standing Committee.

11. Agriculture Union Convention – Québec 2008

Progress report. André talked about some of the activities that he's working on for the convention in Québec city. The three day convention will run from August 13h-15th, 2008.

12. Training Session – Day Four

Theresa Johnson of the PSAC was on hand to provide Council members with some insight on the new Public Service Employment Act.

13. Standing Committee reports

Note:

All committee resolutions are deemed to have been moved by the respective Chairperson and seconded by his/ her co-chair.

Finance and Communications

Brenda Baergen (co-chair) presented the report on behalf of the committee, see attached report.

- The Committee's communications recommendation (item 3) to purchase software that would enable membership polling on web site.
M/S/C Unanimously - Recorded Vote #1.
- Adoption of the Finance and Communications Standing Committee report.
M/S/C Unanimously - Recorded Vote #2.

By-Laws and Education

Sam Barlin (co-chair) presented the report on behalf of the committee, see attached report.

- The Committee's recommendation – see item 5 - Appeals Representation Training.
Motion Defeated - Recorded Vote #3.
- The Committee's recommendation – see item 6 – Political Action Course.
M/S/C Unanimously - Recorded Vote #4.
- Adoption of the By-Laws and Education Standing Committee report.
M/S/C Unanimously - Recorded Vote #5.

Collective Bargaining/Health and Safety

Glenn Miller (co-chair) presented the report on behalf of the committee, see attached report.

- The Committee's recommendation to develop on H&S as well as training for Council members.
M/S/C Unanimously - Recorded Vote #6
- Adoption of the Collective Bargaining/Health and Safety Standing Committee report.
M/S/C Unanimously - Recorded Vote #7.

General Committee

Mike Vanson (co-chair) and Howard Willems presented the report on behalf of the committee, see attached report.

- The Committee's recommendation – see EO report – on Human Rights Training for next Council meeting.
M/S/C Unanimously - Recorded Vote #8.
- Adoption of the General Standing Committee report.
M/S/C Unanimously - Recorded Vote #9.

14. Negotiations update - ESA

This item was referred to the Collective Bargaining Health & Safety Standing Committee.

15. H&S communication

This item was referred to the Collective Bargaining Health & Safety Standing Committee.

16. PSAC Education Program Survey

This item was referred to the Bylaws and Education Standing Committee.

17. PSAC Conferences

This item was referred to the General Standing Committee.

18. EO Committee report

This item was referred to the General Standing Committee.

19. Question and Answer period

A general Q&A session took place at the end of day 1.

20. Next Council meeting

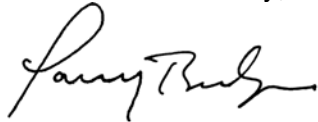
The next meeting will be held in Ottawa and tentative dates were set for November 19-22, 2007.

21. Principles For Reassignment

Yves provided answers for Barry and others regarding the above noted AAFC document. For more detailed information on approved projects, Council members can send request to Yves.

Meeting Adjourned.

Minutes submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Larry Budge". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Larry Budge
Administrative Officer

Report of the Finance and Communication Committee

April 17, 2007

Present: Debbie Forsythe, Brenda Baergen, Bob Jackson, Allan MacRae, Barry Payne, Larry Budge, Sylvie Rochon.

Communication

1. Sign-up Campaign for Rands

There have been 267 rands signed up since the beginning of the campaign. The initial goal of signing up 400 rands could easily be achieved. However the total number of rands at the end of February still remains at approximately 1120. Although on the one hand we feel that the campaign is off to a good start, the number of rands might indicate the reverse. We feel this is due to an increase in departmental hiring which was not considered when our initial goal was established.

There are problems with people signing cards 2 or 3 times still showing up as rands. This problem should be investigated. The committee would like RVP's and Directors to speak with their local executives to inquire whether this is a problem in their areas and provide Christine Gauthier with these names.

The committee would also like to explore reasons why rands do not want to sign membership cards to see if there are any trends. These reasons should be documented and forwarded to Debbie.

2. Orientation Kits

The kits were completed and forwarded to the locals in November. They were very well received and many requests were received for additional kits.

3. Agriculture Website

A drop down menu item for ongoing issues will be added to the Agriculture Union website (eg., PI review, AAFC EG review, etc. All the information pertaining to the specific topic will be accessed from this menu.

The committee discussed the possibility of adding a link to the adjudication decisions to the main page of our website. This should eliminate the necessity of having to mail hard copies to the council.

The minutes from the Regional Seminars will be posted on the website as soon as possible after the electronic versions have been received by National Office.

A Question and Answer section will be created to address the common questions that have been received by National Office. In addition, questions developed for the training on the Info Key Binder will also be used once this cycle of Regional Seminars is complete.

The information provided by Alan Pryde concerning the software required to conduct the membership poll was discussed by the committee. Startup costs would be approximately \$600.00. The types of questions to be asked was discussed and it was decided that the

questions should create interest and provide information. It was also discussed as to who would provide the questions. The committee asks that each RVP/Director provide 2 questions which they would like to see posed to the membership. The launch date to be determined.

Recommendation

The committee recommends that we purchase the software that would enable us to proceed with the membership poll.

4. Newsletter

The next newsletter to the membership will be sent out in June. The newsletter will contain an update of issues and any new items of interest which have occurred since December. The Health and Safety newsletter will also be mailed out at this time.

5. Work/Life Balance

This issue was a follow up from the strategic planning report that was initiated in 2005. Sylvie had collected a great deal of information on work/life balance. After much discussion the committee felt that the topic was too complex to be addressed as a single KeyInfo topic.

Action: Sylvie to ask Alan to draft a summary statement for the toolkit. This statement could include how our contract addresses this issue and how our union addresses this issue. In addition, we will also include information on various organizations which offer assistance and how to contact them.

6. Clear Language resolutions

As a result of a resolution passed at the last Agriculture Convention, it is now possible to submit resolutions in clear language or traditional language. An example of both will be included in the convention call to locals.

7. Web Site Enhancement

At the next council meeting, the committee will review the website and identify areas where improvement could be made. Each committee member will research other websites for ideas. The address of the website or a picture should be sent to Sylvie. Alan Pryde will be asked to attend the next meeting to discuss this issue.

Finance

1. Membership

Based on the January 2007 membership list, we have 9109 members with 1,160 rands.

2. Meal rates

As of April 1, 2007 the meal rates are as follows:

Breakfast \$13.00

Lunch \$12.40

Dinner \$35.30

Incidentals \$17.30

There was no change in mileage from February 1.

3. Audited Financial Statement

The committee reviewed the audited financial statements which the executive approved at their meeting on April 14 and 15. Signed copies will be sent out to locals and council shortly.

4. EO Delegate to Regional Seminar

The issue of EO representatives being fully funded by the RVP for Regional Seminars was discussed at some length. Consensus could not be reached by the committee as to the source of the appropriate funding. Therefore it was felt that a discussion should be held by the entire council to determine how the EO reps should be funded to attend the Regional Seminars.

5. Social Justice Fund

A draft of Agriculture Union Social Justice Fund policy was reviewed by the committee. After much discussion, it was decided to provide copies of the policy to the entire council for input. Comments should be forwarded to Debbie. Further discussion will take place at the next Council meeting in November.

Respectfully submitted
Brenda Baergen

**Report of the Standing Committee On
By-Laws and Education**

Members:

Denis Sicard - Chairperson
Ronald Filteau - RVP Southern Saskatchewan
Sam Barlin - RVP Manitoba, North Western Ontario and Nunavut
Idelta Vieira - National Director of DND
Raphael Tarasco - RVP Western Quebec

The committee met and discussed the following issues.

By-Laws and Regulations:

The committee review the By-Law and Regulations and have no issues

Education:

Item #1: Component Survey of the PSAC Education Program Survey.

The Committee went through the survey and discussed the response that will be submitted to the PSAC.

Item #2 Education Fund Form

A form be developed by this committee for the application of the education fund form Regulation No.12.

Item #3: Union Courses

This committee needs the council input on the Courses that are needed for the Following Positions:

The reply's to Denis Sicard (Chairperson of the Committee) by May 1 2007

Local Executive Members:

Stewards:

Local Activists not a executive:

Facilitators:

Members of Regional Committees:

Women's Committees:
Human rights Committees:
Health and Safety Committees:
Equal Opportunities Committee:
National Aboriginal and Metis circle Committee:
Collective Bargaining:

National Executive Officer:

Other Course:

Item #4 Manual for the Positions of Officers

The Committee looked at this and is developing the Manual but is going to wait for the reply from the council on the reply from Item #3.

Item #5 Appeals Representative Training

The committee recommends that the Appeals Representative Training be given at the next Council meeting.

Moved by Ron Filteau
Seconded by Raphael Tabasco

Item #6 Political Action course

The committee recommends that the Agriculture Union bring in a Lobbyist in to give a half day course on political action at the next council meeting.

Moved by Raphael Tarasco
Seconded by Sam Barlin

**Report as a Whole Moved by Denis Sicard
Seconded by Ronald Filteau**

Report of the Health & Safety/ Collective Bargaining Committee

April 17, 2007

Negotiations/ESA:

- Council members need to be plugged into the Regional Strike Structure of the PSAC, through the PSAC Regional offices, taking direction from the Regional Offices in the event of strike action.
- ESA (Essential Service Agreements) - we are starting the process of negotiating these agreements. The change in legislation has changed what is looked at. It's now what percentage of a position, if any, is deemed essential. So if 10% of a position is deemed essential then that is all that is done and if there are 10 positions doing these duties then 1 employee may be deemed essential to perform 100% of that duty.
- CFIA Negotiations - meetings are scheduled for May 9 & 10. Expect an update from the Bargaining Team after the meetings.
- Treasury Board - there are no meetings scheduled until after the preliminary meetings in May/June.

Health & Safety:

- "Workplace Accidents – "Your Collective Agreement and Injury on Duty Leave". This is what we are placing on our website as our next article. Due to the length, this is the only piece we will put on for this period. It was suggested that the next article would be on the WSIB process and the timeliness applicable and depending on the length we may add some additional pieces.
- PowerPoint presentation on the Hazard Prevention Program - the presentation is completed and awaiting translation before presenting to council. Every employee must be trained, by the employer, on the Hazard Prevention Program, under the Canada Labor Code Part II. This presentation gives an overview of the program that can be taken to every employer and presented at all H&S Policy Committees with the idea that this can be adopted as part of their Hazard Prevention Program. The English version is attached, French translation to follow.
- Local/Regional OSH vs. NOSH - there seems to be some problems with communication flowing between the regional/local OSH's and the NOSH, particularly within CFIA. The new employer co-chair recognizes this problem and wants to address fixing this as well as other problem areas. NOSH/Policy Committees are the recognized body responsible for Health and Safety, according to HRSDC. Everything at the regional and local OSH committee is under the jurisdiction of the NOSH, any work done by the regional or local OSH committees must follow the policies set out by NOSH or in the case of JHA's follow the template sent out from NOSH. It was also identified that the

reporting structures of Health and Safety committees will form a piece for a future article for our website.

- Training on Health & Safety - it was identified that council needs to be given some training on Health and Safety. Some council members have never worked with Health and Safety and some have very limited experience. A motion was made to develop a training package.

Motion

Whereas: Members of the Agriculture Union Council are responsible to provide advice and guidance to members in their regions on union issues, including health and safety,

And Whereas: Some of our council members are new to council and/or health and safety,

Be it resolved that: The Collective Bargaining and Health and Safety Committee, work with the By-laws and Education Committee to develop a policy on “ required health and safety training for council members”,

Be it further resolved that: The Agriculture Union ensure that council members receive the required health and safety training. The training may come from the employer, the PSAC or from the Agriculture union itself.

M/S/C (unanimously) Fabian Murphy/John Langs

- Campylobacter - there is a sub-group of CFIA-NOSH, Bob sits on this, which has been formed to look at this issue and to develop guidelines. They are broadening their mandate to all bacterial contaminants.

GENERAL STANDING COMMITTEE

April 17, 2007

Present: Howard Willems, Michele Coe, Darrell-Lee McKenzie, Mike Vanson,
Curt Elash, Marianne Hladun
Report moved by Howard Willems and seconded by Mike Vanson

Agenda

UMC Survey
Update – EO Report
Staffing Complaints
Fitness to Work
Youth Strategy

UMC Survey

Documents have been finalized for use by Locals including the following:

1. Terms of Reference
2. UMC Checklist
3. Standing Agenda Items

The documents have been forwarded to the Finance and Communications Committee for inclusion in the Key Info Binder and the Agriculture Union website.

EO Report

See attached for report from the E.O. Committee

Discussion regarding the name of the Equal Opportunities Committee. This committee supports the E.O. Committee's decision to submit a resolution to Convention to change the name of the committee to the Human Rights Committee.

The committee recommends that Human Rights training be provided to all RVP's and Directors at the November 2007 council meeting (as per Resolution of Record).

We also suggest the link between the RP's/Directors and the regional E.O. be strengthened. RVP's and Directors are reminded to maintain regular contact with their regional E.O. committee representative.

Staffing Complaints

The committee tabled this agenda item to deal with further following the proposed Human Rights Training session in November 2007.

Fitness to Work Evaluations

Several more cases of members being requested to undergo a Fitness to Work evaluation have been identified by council members. This item was referred to this Committee as a human rights issue and we realize the implications with Occupational Health & Safety and we are referring this to the Occupational Health and Safety Committee for future newsletters. (As an addendum, our Committee would be happy to work with the Occupational Health & Safety Committee on developing information).

The Health Canada Fitness to Work Employees Guide has been printed for distribution to all Council members.

Youth Strategy

AGRICULTURE UNION YOUTH STRATEGY

“The labour movement is my parents movement, it is not for young workers”

Quote from an Sask. Federation of Labour Youth Strategy

The Agriculture Union is committed to ensuring that opportunities are available for our youth members to participate in our union, their local labor movement and/or their community. Our future success depends on our ability to ensure a continuation of strong union leadership at all levels of the union.

Background:

In August 2005, delegates to the Agriculture Union Triennial Convention passed a resolution calling on the Agriculture Union to develop a youth strategy to increase participation of youth in our union and to ensure a succession plan for our leadership.

The development of a youth strategy was assigned to the General Standing Committee and after discussions and review of many sources of resource material; the committee has prepared the following strategy.

Objectives:

Identify young workers issues in the workplace

Identify barriers to young workers participation in our union

Build and strengthen the relationship and involvement of young workers within our union

Build understanding and solidarity of our common issues as workers, regardless of age or employment status

Implementation

The strategy will be conducted in several phases, each depending on the results of the previous phase. The general nature of each phase is:

Phase 1 – Information Gathering

Phase 2 – Evaluation of Survey Results

Phase 3 – Develop an Action Plan to address issues and/or barriers identified in Phase 1 and 2

Phase 4 – Implementation and ongoing development of action items

Phase 1 – Information Gathering

The General Standing Committee will be developing a survey, the results of which will provide information regarding young workers and their issues.

National Council and Regional EO/HR Representatives are asked to conduct a minimum of two surveys. When all surveys are completed, this process will provide the General Standing Committee with 50 responses which is a reasonable representation of the Agriculture Union's youth membership.

When identifying the two members to be surveyed, it would be preferable to select at least one member who has had no union involvement and at least one member who has had some union involvement.

National Council and Regional EO/HR Representatives are not limited to two surveys each. Ideally, we would like to have one completed survey from each local.

The General Standing Committee will continue to gather information and resources that will assist in the development of future phases of the Agriculture Union Youth Strategy.

ACTION:

Each RVP and Director is requested to contact a minimum of two youth workers for the purposes of conducting the survey.

Each Regional EO/HR Representative is requested to contact a minimum of two youth "equity" members for the purposes of conducting the survey. The Regional EO/HR Representative is to consult with their RVP's to ensure there is no duplication.

EO Committee Report
To the General Standing Committee

The Agriculture Union EO Committee held it's annual meeting December 4-5/06 in Ottawa. No Regional Rep was available from Alberta. (Note: Alberta has since conducted another election and a new EO/HR representative and alternate have been elected). Currently the committee encompasses all 5 equity groups recognized by PSAC.

Items of interest for the General Standing Committee:

- An 3 hour orientation session was held on the afternoon of Dec. 3rd for the 2 new members of the committee (QC & ON). This practice will be continued in future and served to allow the new members an opportunity to discuss the structure and role of the committee without stalling discussion during the 2 day meeting of the full committee.
- Discussion was held on what issues should be the priority of EO reps. Communication and development of networks was identified as key to the future success of the committee. Regional Reps were encouraged to ensure they regularly communicate with the National Officers in their region and should utilize the knowledge of the National Officers in developing their networks.
- The committee had a discussion on the name of the committee and consensus was that the committee will be putting forward a resolution to the next Triennial Convention to amend the Bylaws and Regulations to change references to EO to Human Rights.
- Regional Representatives identified a need for training on human rights and equity in general.
- Regional Representatives each presented a report of activities in their region (included as part of the minutes).
- Regional Representatives committed to ensuring that events are planned for Human Rights Day (Dec. 10th) in each of their regions. This could include originating events or participating in events already planned by other organizations or unions.
- Regional Representatives were also tasked with creating and maintaining a list of Local EO contacts.

National Council April 2007
 Conseil National Avril 2007

Recorded Votes/Votes Consignés

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9					
Baergen	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1					
Barlin	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1					
Coe	1	1	2	1	1	4	1	1	1					
Elash	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1					
Filteau	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1					
Forsythe	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1					
Grégoire	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1					
Hladun	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1					
Jackson	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1					
Kingston	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1					
Krebs	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1					
Langs	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1					
MacRae	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1					
McKenzie	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1					
Miller	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1					
Murphy	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1					
Payne	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1					
Sicard	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1					
Tarasco	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1					
Vanson	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1					
Vieira	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4					
Willems	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1					
Ducharme	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1					

1=yes/pour	2=no/non	3=abstain/abstention	4=absent
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