

SUMMER STRIKE 2009 – COMMENTS & RECORDED VOTE **(The recorded vote of Toronto City Council is listed further below)**

As the City gets back to providing all of its services to the residents of Toronto, and the streets and temporary dumps are cleaned up, I believe it's important to review this summers' labour strike.

The settlement with the two main Unions representing City workers has resulted in a three year contract, beginning (retroactively) to January 1, 2009 lasting until December 31, 2011.

The wage settlements are 1.75% in 2009, 2.00% in 2010, and 2.25% in 2011. Based upon the current staff complement the financial impact in each year will be:

Local 79

2009 - \$ 16.503 million

2010 - \$ 16.833 million

2011 - \$ 17.211 million

Local 416

2009 - \$ 7.189 million

2010 - \$ 7.333 million

2011 - \$ 7.498 million

Not all of these costs are directly paid through Property Taxes. A portion is covered from Water Rates, various user fees, and chargebacks to different entities.

The City had budgeted for a possible 3% wage settlement in 2009, so the lower actual settlement represents a \$ 15.137 million dollar savings on our 2009 budget. This savings will be allocated towards our operating surplus, after any additional strike and/or clean-up costs are deducted.

The wage increase award is retroactive to January 1, 2009. By the end of these contracts the City's cost base for these worker's wages will increase by \$ 72.567 million.

On the key issue of sick banks, the settlement allows for all current employees at the beginning of the strike (who were included in the Sick Bank system) to continue to have the right to accumulate 18 sick days per year for a future payout.

Employees will now have three options:

1. Switch to the new Illness and Injury Plan and cash out their existing accumulated sick days up to a maximum of 130 days, based upon a formula related to years of service. The minimum payout shall be \$700, even if this exceeds the current value of their accumulated sick bank.
2. Switch to the new Illness and Injury Plan, and freeze their accumulated sick bank, for payout at the time of leaving City employment.

3. Remain in the Sick Bank system and continue to accumulate sick days. Receive a payout of up to 130 days upon leaving City employment.

Staff will have to select one of these options by mid-November this year. The current outstanding liabilities for accrued sick banks are approximately \$140 million. We will not know by how much this liability will go down until late November. Staff who decide to remain in the plan will continue to add new liability, until, on an ever diminishing basis ultimately the liability will be erased in some thirty years or so.

Additionally these employees will receive Family Day as a statutory holiday. The City had hoped to trade off the Remembrance Day holiday for Family Day, but failed to achieve this. This represents a lost day of productivity for the City, or "More money for less work".

It also has created an issue with how to deal with the non-unionized City employees, who currently get Remembrance Day off but not Family Day. The City will have to make some decisions on how to align these two groups of employees. Other Unionized employees will likely now seek this additional holiday. In the case of Police, Firefighters, Libraries, and others this may lead to the payment of overtime or shift bonuses for working on Family Day.

Finally, the City agreed to strike a "contracting-in" committee with Local 79 to seek opportunities to bring work back in-house.

Who won, who lost? Ultimately taxpayers pay, so taxpayers lost. Could we have lost more? Certainly. Could we have lost less? I believe so. Local 416 issued an ultimatum and the City quickly settled.

The Mayor never set out winning conditions for the City.

The Mayor cried poor yet, brought forward a 2009 budget with a huge increase in staff and spending. He froze non-union wages, but refused to allow City Council a vote on freezing Councillor's salaries. He refused to contemplate the use of outside contractors to help in cleaning up the City.

The City's contingency plan for strike related disruptions failed to put into place measures to clean-up temporary dump sites during the strike, or to allow Council to operate somewhat normally (as was the case in Windsor this year during their strike).

It has become evident that these deals were available, and could have been reached, without such a long strike. The strike was unnecessary under these circumstances.

I was required by Provincial law to declare my conflict of interest related to Local 79, as my wife is a City employee within that local. I did express my views clearly on strike related issues as they apply to Local 416 (although the issues with 79 were similar). I therefore could only vote on the contract with Local 416. **I opposed it.**

The Recorded Vote at Toronto City Council (21-17):

YES to DEAL

Maria Augimeri (York Centre)
Sandra Bussin (Beaches-East York)
Shelley Carroll (Don Valley East)
Raymond Cho (Scarborough-Rouge River)
Janet Davis (Beaches-East York)
Glenn de Baeremaeker (Scarborough Centre)
Frank Di Giorgio (York South-Weston)
Paula Fletcher (Toronto-Danforth)
Adam Giambrone (Davenport)
Mark Grimes (Etobicoke Lakeshore)
Suzan Hall (Etobicoke North)
Adrian Heaps (Scarborough Southwest)
Doug Holyday (Etobicoke Centre)
Pam McConnell (Toronto Centre-Rosedale)
Joe Mihevc (St. Paul's)
David Miller (Mayor)
Joe Pantalone (Trinity-Spadina)
Gord Perks (Parkdale-High Park)
Anthony Perruzza (York West)
Bill Saundercook (Parkdale-High Park)
Adam Vaughan (Trinity-Spadina)

NO to DEAL

Paul Ainslie (Scarborough East)
Brian Ashton (Scarborough Southwest)
Mike Del Grande (Scarborough-Agincourt)
Mike Feldman (York Centre)
Rob Ford (Etobicoke North)
Cliff Jenkins (Don Valley West)
Norm Kelly (Scarborough-Agincourt)
Chin Lee (Scarborough-Rouge River)
Peter Milczyn (Etobicoke-Lakeshore) (Local 416 Only, conflict on 79)
Denzil Minnan-Wong (Don Valley East)
Ron Moeser (Scarborough East)
Frances Nunziata (York South-Weston)
Case Ootes (Toronto-Danforth)
John Parker (Don Valley West)
David Shiner (Willowdale) (Local 79 Only, conflict on 416)
Karen Stintz (Eglinton-Lawrence)

Michael Thompson (Scarborough Centre)
Michael Walker (St. Paul's)

ABSENT

Gloria Lindsay Luby

Howard Moscoe (abstained from meeting and votes due to a conflict of interest with one of the Unions)

John Filion

Cesar Palacio

Giorgio Mammoliti

Kyle Rae