

Solidarity Movement - Who We Are

The purpose of a Local Union is to bring together the members for their common interests. The top leaders of Local 222 fail to do that in so many areas – they have lost their way.

We have poor communication, no membership meetings, two-tier contracts, constantly eroding wages and benefits, retired members left behind.

It is outrageous that we pay our President and Financial Secretary almost \$150,000 a year each, and they see no reason for restraint, even when dues income is down.

Here are some ideas for positive change. If you agree with them - join us. Be part of discussing and preparing proposals to membership meetings. Help support candidates that pledge to implement policies that will benefit all the members.

Join our
Facebook
Group



Solidarity Movement on Facebook
www.facebook.com/groups/292972735372052

Bargain for Gains

- Commit to fighting concessionary and two-tier agreements. As former CAW President, Bob White said, “Workers don’t need a union to go backwards”.
- Membership-driven bargaining.
- Full disclosure of everything in the tentative collective agreement before we vote.

Better Communication

- An effective social media presence.
- Return to a monthly Oshaworker.
- Schedule union meetings when members can attend. Post the agenda and minutes.

Real Democracy

- Democracy is more than voting - it is the rank-and-file members taking control of the Local.
- The members must have easy access to all the information and make the decisions.
- Save money and increase participation by adding online voting to existing options.

Accountability

- Membership review of exorbitant salaries.
- No secret agreements or deals made behind closed doors.
- An annual Local budget presented, debated, and voted on by the members.

Solidarity and Participation

- Eliminate the bully culture.
- Action and education against racism and all forms of discrimination.
- Make sure everyone’s voice is heard, including in elected positions.

Solidarity Movement

November 29, 2021

No. 3

Fighting to Win

Mobilize Members, Take on the Companies

Now is the time for workers to organize to reverse the downward slide of our wages, benefits, and pensions. That is the lesson of recent successful organizing and strikes across North America. John Deere workers struck for 5 weeks to win major wage increases, the return of quarterly COLA payments, and better pensions (see p. 2). This summer, Unifor members at Cadbury also struck, fought off concessions and won gains.

Winning takes real organization and solidarity. It doesn’t magically happen. Meanwhile, in Local 222 we see the opposite of successful organizing. Bargaining is ongoing for many supplier workers that are an essential part of the new GM pickup assembly operation. But those workers have been given no information, have not had any meetings where they could have their voice heard, and have had no opportunity to be involved in setting demands or mobilizing support (page 3).

Local 222 must recognize that the power of the union is in the membership. Members must be included in a meaningful way in their bargaining, have full disclosure of tentative

agreements before ratification, and immediate access to ratified contracts.

This is a problem that could be easily solved if Local leadership chose to empower workers. This isn’t rocket science. Workers’ power can only be manifested if the workers are fully involved, have meetings, have a bargaining committee, and can consider using all of the tools available to them in fighting back against greedy employers.

How to SIGN UP For LOCAL 222 Zoom Membership Meetings:

Please email local222@local222.ca with your full name and employee ID#. Zoom login information will be emailed by 11:00 a.m. on the morning of the meeting.

NEXT MEETING: THUR. DEC. 2 at 3 PM

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10,000 Deere Workers Win Big

Strike for 5 Weeks, Reject 2 Contract Offers

John Deere workers showed they meant business: they rejected a contract recommended by the UAW by 90% on Oct. 10. They went on strike October 14, and rejected a second offer, before voting in favour of the third.

Highlights – traditional pensions for new hires, instead of their elimination; pay increases of 10% now, 5% in 2023 and 2025, 3% lump sums the other three years; restore quarterly COLA payments; increases in pensions of \$250 per month with 25 years; and more.

The courage of Deere workers in fighting for a better standard of living and more secure retirement shows us the way forward.



The Deere workers benefited from seeing the whole contract 3 days before voting – a reform they fought for and won by a motion at the UAW’s Deere Council.

More at tinyurl.com/DeereStrike

Did you know....

That GM in Oshawa was completely converted to military production in 1942, and that the first issues of our Local paper in 1943 were called the *War Worker*?

Workers in Oshawa, about 50% women, manufactured trucks, ambulances, artillery tractors, tank hulls, and fuselages for the Mosquito bomber. 1,689 GM employees joined the armed forces during WWII - 73 were killed.

This issue of the War Worker headlines a full labour slate for City offices, sponsored by the Oshawa Labour Council. “The working people of Oshawa form the majority of the city’s population ... If all union members and their relatives turn out to vote there is no doubt that the labor candidates will be elected.”

Other topics included the Credit Union, the Women’s Auxiliary, many of the feeder plants, meetings of the stewards body, reports on union meetings (a resolution urging Canada to admit refugees from Nazi regimes).

POLITICAL CONF. MAIN TOPIC



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FULL LABOR SLATE

OPEN FORUM WELL ATTENDED

The series of discussions on the Soviet Union being run by the Open Forum are proving to be exceptionally successful and it has been decided to continue them for the first two Sunday evenings in December.

SUPPORT URGED

By M. J. FENWICK, Vice-Pres. Labor Council
A feature of the coming municipal election will be the slate sponsored by the Oshawa & District Labor Council. The Council, with which Local 222 is affiliated, has decided to run candidates for city council, board of education and public utilities, so labor can be adequately represented.

Resolution Passed

Whether to affiliate to any political party or to remain neutral, to send delegates, or not to send a full quota or only send a small number to the UAW-CIO conference being held in Windsor over the weekend were the main points at stake in discussions by the Executive and again at the last membership meeting.

The question to be considered at the conference is that of affiliation to the CIO as a union body. Some doubt was expressed as to the wisdom of abiding by decisions of such a conference in this matter and finally a resolution from Local 222 asking that a referendum on a Local Union basis be taken before any action takes place that would commit any Local to any final step was passed to be sent on to the convention.

It is learned that the whole plan of affiliation is coming in for a thorough discussion with R. R. Squire, leader of the CIO, being present to answer the delegates' queries as to the place of the union in such an organization.

Published by the **Solidarity Movement** to improve communication, engagement and activism in Local 222. **Contact us for extra copies to distribute in your workplace.**

Produced and paid for by volunteer members. Not an official publication of Unifor Local 222. Contact: Rebecca Keetch solidarity@solidaritymovement.ca

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GM Contract: 4% Lump Sums - But Not For ALL

Unifor’s 2020 auto contract has two tiers. New hires start at \$13 an hour below assembler’s rate, take **8 years to get to equal pay**, and have an **inferior defined contribution pension**. To rub salt into those wounds, senior workers get a 4% lump sum payment in year 2 of the contract, but everyone with less than 8 years gets nothing. Two-tier is a problem in many contracts, so the principles discussed here are important to all of us. Rebecca Keetch, a GM Oshawa member, wrote about this in the Solidarity Movement Facebook group. Here are some excerpts:

<https://tinyurl.com/4PercentLumpSum>

We have a problem.

As 2nd tier workers again feel the sting of being left behind we should ask, ‘What has happened to our union?’ Has our leadership learned to accept management’s perspective so well they forgot the workers perspective?

Equal pay for equal work. Period. This is a fundamental union value and helps to build solidarity and strength within the union. Anything less and we allow the company to divide and destroy us. The membership needs to get the union leadership back in line ...

Every hour that an ‘in progression’ member works is an hour that the company is taking something away from them. When they move up the progression, the company just takes a little less. A lower seniority worker and a higher seniority worker doing the same job both bring the same productive value to the company. Why in the world do we accept that one should be paid less than the other?

There’s something else I want to be crystal clear on - I absolutely believe high seniority employees deserve every penny they earn, in fact wages should be higher given the yearly record profits workers create for the company. I just have this crazy idea that everyone deserves them ...

To move through a wage progression to get what others get, doing the exact same job, is not a bonus of some sort. It’s a reminder of the thousands of dollars that go into the pockets of the corporations instead of ours, even as those companies make record profits over and over again.

Solidarity Movement

November 10, 2021

Supplier Workers Deserve Information and Involvement in Negotiations

The September Oshaworker reported that negotiations were taking place for TFT, Android, AWC and others. Many workers from these companies are asking questions which should be answered. Who is doing the negotiating? What are the demands? When will the workers get to participate? What is the status of certification? Why have there been no updates, leaflets or meetings?

Information Leaflets

At the very least, the Local leadership should be putting out information leaflets to update us on what is happening, and get our input. The Unifor Constitution says that the union “belongs to its members”, and that “an informed and active membership is the foundation of a democratic union”.

An update is needed letting the supplier workers know what the timelines are, what the barriers are, and what still needs to be done. The workers should be participating in this process and be kept aware of exactly

what is happening. There are many more ways workers could be involved in negotiations than just voting on the agreement when it is all done.

Call a Meeting

Discussions to get worker input should have already occurred. If they have not, it’s not too late to schedule meetings and this should happen now. A meeting would allow workers to ask questions and have their voices heard.

“An informed and active membership is the foundation of a democratic and dynamic trade union.” – Unifor Constitution Article 5

This is an important opportunity to build solidarity within these units, and solidarity between GM and supplier workers. An informed and engaged membership will be a stronger membership and this will result in better collective agreements.

The Solidarity Movement published this flyer on social media on November 10. To see more content like this find us on Facebook and visit our webpage: www.solidaritymovement.ca

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